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Paying Attention!
with Tom Duggan

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VALLEY PATRIOTS OF THE MONTH

Infantry Soldier - Major Rick Kelley U.S. Army-Retired

John Cuddy
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

Truly a "hero in our midst", it was an honor to interview Major Kelley. We are from the same home town, Lawrence, Massachusetts, and he went to grade school with my father at St Patrick's Grammar School, but I never had the

chance to really talk to Major Rick Kelley U.S. Army-Retired until a few weeks ago. The "tip of the spear" in the U.S. Military are our Army and Marine Infantrymen, they often call themselves 11 Bravo's. A U.S. Marine Captain once told me that the only force that can take and hold ground, is the American infantrymen. As I listened to Major Kelley speak, I was

drawn into the conversation by the respect he showed to an often maligned soldier, the American Draftee.

Having served in the comparatively better paid, "all volunteer military" myself, I had misconceptions of what the 1950-1960s era drafted U.S. soldier was like and how they lived, worked, and served our nation. Mr. Kelley cleared the air quickly, stating clearly that for the most part, the drafted American soldier served as well as the volunteer American soldier in his era.

He spoke equally as eloquently on the fighting ability of the native Vietnamese Montagnard tribesman. The U.S. Army Special Forces with whom Mr. Kelley served, thought so much of these fighters that they would go out on patrol with them, a handful of U.S. Special Forces troops fighting alongside 100 or more tribesmen. Today the largest population on these tribesmen outside of South East Asia, is in the State of North Carolina where many Special Forces Units are also based.

Originally serving in the U.S. Army as an enlisted soldier, enlisting in 1959, after graduating from Central Catholic High School in 1958 and doing a year at Newman Prep in Boston. His first choice of service was the U.S. Navy, but decided on the U.S. Army as they would allow a 36 month initial enlistment. Rick Kelley was commissioned a 2nd Lt. in Officer's Candidate School (OCS) Class 1-66. And despite trying to avoid the Navy's 48 month obligation, he ended up serving



OCS Class 1966-01 Second LT
Richard Kelley U.S. Army Graduation Photo. He retired as a Major.

our nation for 21 years as both an officer and enlisted man. He was the "tip of the spear", serving in the Infantry and Special Forces. While serving he earned a BA from University of Tampa, and also graduated from Suffolk Law School.

He was awarded the Bronze Star with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal, U.S. Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Gallantry Cross with one Palm,

HERO: PAGE 21

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EDITORIAL: Would YOU Give Hitler More Power?

Since President Donald Trump was elected, the Democrats in Congress and their mouthpieces in the “news” media have routinely made the charge that President Donald Trump is a racist “Nazi”. He’s even been called “Hitler”.

Nazis are considered right-wing, fascist, white supremacists.

Trump is also accused by these same political forces of being a spy for Vladimir Putin’s Russia.

Russia is a communist country. Communists are considered left-wing authoritarians.

Somehow, the Trump haters want you to believe that President Trump is simultaneously a communist and a fascist, both Hitler and Stalin, all rolled up into one, with Mussolini and Pol Pot thrown in for good measure. For those of you who believe even one of those things, all we ask is that you put aside the narrative you have been fed, and think for yourself for just a few more paragraphs.

Consider this.

The Nazis exterminated millions of people in WWII, as did the communists (millions more after). Nazis and Communists use the structure of government to rule by fear, force, and death.

So, if you were in Congress and you believed Donald Trump was a racist, Nazi, communist, white supremacist, anti-Islamic, Jew-hater ... would YOU vote to give “the next Hitler” MORE power to spy on Americans?

Would you publicly advocate giving him additional legal authority to keep secret lists of “enemies of the state”? Would you vote to increase his power to spy on everyone’s emails, phone calls, or let federal police track your every move through your cell phone?

Of course not.

What sane person would recognize a critical danger like “the next Adolph Hitler” and then give him more power?

RIGHT?

RIGHT?!

Yet, that’s exactly what the Democrats in Congress did last month.

As the Democrats in Congress were on CNN every night attacking Trump as a genocidal maniac, during the day they were voting unanimously to renew the Patriot Act’s FISA provision. FISA allows Trump’s FBI and other federal law enforcement agencies (like the NSA, and even IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT), to have more legal authority to spy on American citizens without their knowledge.

Under FISA, the government can keep secret files on Americans that are deemed enemies of the state... or ... as the Democrats would explain it... enemies of Donald Trump.

Yet, not one Democrat opposed the renewal of the FISA provision of the Patriot Act last week; not Ed Markey, not Dick Durbin, not Bernie Sanders ... not even Elizabeth Warren.

These same people who sell you the story that Trump is the new “Adolph Hitler”, themselves gave Adolph the power to abuse government, seek out and destroy his enemies, and begin the process of exterminating blacks, Jews, and anyone who isn’t white.

What’s worse, CNN and the fake “news” media gave aid and comfort to the Democrat liars by burying the story of the FISA renewal and shouting Nazi, Nazi, over and over again hoping you won’t notice.

If ever there was a case of liars exposing themselves through their own actions, the vote to renew FISA is it.

A wise man once said it doesn’t matter what someone says, “Trust only behavior”.

We are watching the behavior of the Democrats in Congress ... we hope our Democrat readers who hear and repeat their lies would too ... because there’s not much there to trust anymore.

Will The Globe Follow-up on Its Workplace Abuse Article?

Aliana Brodmann E. von Richthofen
VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

After decades of being begged by hundreds, if not thousands, of workplace abuse victims to report on this escalating crime, The Boston Globe finally published a superficial article on 12/30/17: “Still in the Shadows, bullying at work takes a huge toll.” For starters, it’s not in the shadows. Workplace bullying is open and everywhere, destroying individuals and

entire families as it rips through society. It is the mainstream media, including The Boston Globe, that tries to keep it in the shadows.

The article was hardly a belated confession that the paper had sidestepped this major public interest matter. It was more likely a feeble attempt at challenging the December article in The Valley Patriot “America’s New McCarthyism” that had exposed this recipient of 26 Pulitzer Prizes on its glaring omission of reporting on real victims instead of lavishly covering

unsubstantiated sexual abuse allegations against men of power.

But more to the point: will the overrated Pulitzer recipient follow up, now that the paper has acknowledged the existence of workplace bullying as the widespread crime it is? Will it conduct proper investigations and report on the ruthlessness of perpetrators and the devastating trauma it causes – as intended – its unsuspecting victims? Will it end it’s drawn out 15 Minute spotlight on dumb actresses in black lace and plunging neckline tease wear (as it’s called in Europe) while on a puritanism trip, and finally shine it on real crimes the public deserves to know about?

Probably not. Or at least not in the form of the comprehensive research required to properly analyze the dynamics of bullying and the roles and interests of the usual players? My reason for doubt being that the paper lives off business relationships with some of the worst offenders: corporate institutions, local government and the judiciary. Thus protecting some of the vilest criminals for self-interest rather than cautioning the public.

A corny piece followed the “Shadows” article on 01/03/18: “Dads, too, claim unequal treatment at work.” Sort of a failed demonstration of follow-up on the topic. However, this item defies the truth because people at risk don’t fit into any particular group (mothers, fathers etc.) at

all. Anyone who rubs an employer, influential co-worker or superior the wrong way for whatever reason, often completely unrelated to the employee’s performance, can be subject to tsunamis of abuse. Can get fired, denied unemployment benefits and blackballed from ever being able to land successive employment.

This happens because the employer is usually better informed and equipped than the employee, who wrongly believes that striving for excellence will keep him or her employed when in fact excellence might cause a superior to feel threatened and want that employee gone.

Employees also trust “employee handbooks” that outline the public image the employer wants to project, not the widespread prevalence of internal discrimination, deceit and tolerance of unprovoked bullying. Many employees believe that HR (Human Resources) will help them when in fact that office is paid by the employer and retained, among other things, to weed out employees internally labeled “undesirable.” And as a hostile employer moves forward in the systematic elimination process of an unwanted employee, the uninformed employee, sensing tension, attempts to prove his abilities to keep his job. However, the harder he tries, the more aggressively he is marginalized, sidelined and often served written warnings to

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Corrections: Please contact the editors at [valleypatriot@aol.com](#)

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The Valley Patriot is not responsible for, nor do we necessarily share the opinions of columnists and contributors that are published in the paper. Columns, by definition, are opinion pieces.

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GLOBE: PAGE 22

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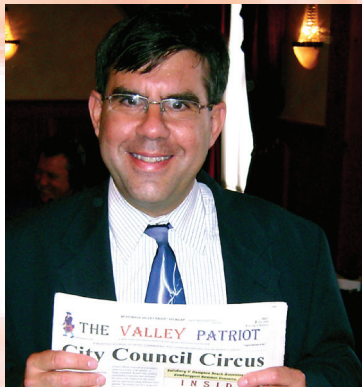
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Home Health VNA names Linda Miller to Director of Hospice Services

LAWRENCE – Linda Miller, RN, of Dracut, MA, has been named Director of Hospice Services for Merrimack Valley Hospice. In this role, Miller will oversee clinical and administrative operations with a goal of exceeding industry standards in quality, growth and patient satisfaction. As Director of Hospice Services, Miller is responsible for ensuring that the highest quality, compassionate care is delivered in a timely manner to our patients at High Pointe House in Haverhill as well as those receiving hospice care through York Hospital Hospice and throughout our Southern NH service area.

Miller received a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Relations from The University of Connecticut and a Nursing degree from St. Francis School of Nursing. She has over 20 years of experience in hospice, and case management. Prior to joining Merrimack Valley Hospice, Miller worked at Newton Wellesley Hospital and has held many leadership roles in case management and hospice care.

Miller lives in Dracut with her family. Home Health Foundation, the leader in home health and hospice care, is com-



prised of affiliate agencies Home Health VNA, Merrimack Valley Hospice and HomeCare, Inc. Together, the three agencies serve more than 110 communities throughout the Merrimack Valley, Northeastern Massachusetts, and Southern New Hampshire. Merrimack Valley Hospice also serves the Southern Maine region as York Hospital Hospice in partnership with York Hospital. For more information, visit our website at HomeHealthFoundation.org.

“WEATHER 101” WITH AL!

The Dead of Winter

Al Kaprielian
VALLEY PATRIOT WEATHERMAN

Welcome to February which is the final month of meteorological winter. February can be known for big snowstorms and blizzards.

The Blizzard of 1978 occurred in early February. This storm stalled southeast of Cape Cod & the Islands which caused snow to continue falling for a couple of days. The surface low pressure system got caught in an upper level low pressure system which caused the surface low pressure to stall. When this occurs we say the lows are vertically stacked which means the surface and upper level low pressure systems were in about the same location. One of the main computer models then was the LFM (limited fine mesh model).

This model did not show an upper level low pressure system. It was weak with the upper level winds and the upper air pattern. This model did not show a blizzard developing. As a result people went to work that day as it appeared conditions would not be as worse as they were. For the commute home it was a nightmare cars were stuck on the off ramps on Route 128.

People were left stranded in their cars until front end loaders came and got their cars off the off ramps. The snow was just too deep for the snow plows. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Blizzard of 78.

I was a student in high school at the time. After the Blizzard of 78 the LFM model was discontinued and not used anymore. Recapping this past January 2018 we saw an intense snowstorm and a lot of wind and coastal flooding on Thursday January 4.

Many areas received over a foot of snow. The strong winds off the ocean due to the intense storm produced major coastal flooding. Many coastal roads were under water and had to be closed. This storm's air pressure got down to an amazing 28.23 inches of mercury. The difference with this storm compared to the Blizzard of 78 was the fact that it was progressive kept on moving. If it ever stalled like the Blizzard of 78 this would have caused even worse conditions along the coast for coastal residences. An example of the coastal flooding with the January 4th storm was the cars at Gloucester High School which were submerged under sea water.

They all had to be towed out of the parking lot. After this storm moved away any leftover sea water outside people's homes

froze and turned to ice as colder air moved in behind the storm causing temperatures to drop. Another storm occurred on January 16 into the 17th which caused some snow but not the intensity of the January 4th storm. On January 23 warm air was supposed to get into all areas and produce rain.

However, in Northern MA and New Hampshire cold air remained trapped at the surface and would not get eroded away. As the rain fell the drops froze after hitting the ground. This is known as freezing rain. This caused icy conditions in Northern MA and New Hampshire making for dangerous driving and walking conditions. The cold air was up against the northern mountains which prevented the milder air from reaching the surface (ground).

The computer models did not show this happening. After this weather event came the January thaw (a warm period in January). The thaw was with us on January 26-28. High pressure was located off the east coast and sent warmer southwest winds into New England. During this period temperatures rose into the upper 40's and lower 50's. Due to the mild temperatures some people got the shorts out even though officially it is still winter. The mild temperatures did not last long as colder air moved back in behind a cold front on January 29. This cold front stalled south and southeast of New England.

A coastal low pressure system formed on this front and gave some parts of southern New England several inches of snow. West Wareham got 8.6 inches. North Acushnet in Bristol county MA got 8.5 inches. Kingston and Plymouth MA got 8 inches. More snow fell than was predicted. The reason for some higher than predicted snow amounts was the fluffy nature of the snow. Fluffy snow can accumulate quickly due to the fluff factor. This storm tracked well offshore along with the heaviest precip. The fluffy nature of the snow made for higher amounts. In northern MA the snow dropped off to very little amounts. In southern New Hampshire no snow fell due to the dry air at low levels of the atmosphere. This dry air caused the snow to evaporate before reaching the ground. As we start the month of February it appears the weather pattern may become more active with an increase in storms. Next month we will recap the storms that occur in February and take a look at what to expect in March. In the meantime stay warm and safe.

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LOCAL CHIEFS ON OPIOIDS, VIOLENCE, & ANGELS PROGRAM

Duggan Holds Opioid Summit with Four Local Police Chiefs

Paying Attention! is recorded at the Studio 21 Podcast Cafe in Salem N.H. above Two Guys Smoke Shop on Route 28. This is part 2. You can watch the video of this entire interview on Tom Duggan's YouTube channel. You can watch the live taping of the program every Thursday on the Paying Attention Podcast Channel on YouTube from 2-4pm.

Much has been made of the Gloucester's Angel Program; what do each of you think about that?

(The Gloucester Police Department has decided to grant amnesty to any addict who comes to the station and turns in their drugs in exchange for going into a supervised drug rehabilitation program.)

CHIEF GRAY: "I've spoken to the District Attorney's Office on this and quite frankly I don't think it was done right because we don't have the authority (as police officers) to grant immunity when someone commits a crime. The program that they have is well intended, they had good intentions, but it's not by the law and therefore I don't think that you can do it for the sake of doing it. You have to have the D.A.'s office involved and on board with you before you just venture out like that.

CHIEF DENARO: I work very closely with D.A. Jon Blodgett and one of the things we discussed is that we are not allowed to make deals for the D.A.'s office. They are the prosecutory arm of this whole thing. We make the arrests but we can't just arbitrarily tell people 'we aren't going to charge you for this offense'. We can't



Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan held an opioid summit on his new show PAYING ATTENTION! with four area police chiefs. From left to right above are: Tom Duggan, Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon, Boxford Police Chief James Riter, Haverhill Police Chief Alan DeNaro, and North Andover Police Chief Charles Gray, whom Duggan has frequently called a "cops' cop".

do that. I was never really involved in the Angel's program, which is why we started our own program; we have a sergeant, two officers and someone from NFI, a counselor who go out and try to get people into the programs. We don't have a ton of people who come into the station and knock on our door and say I need help. Usually when somebody gets caught, or they overdose, or they're involved in an arrest where you have an opportunity to circumvent that path that they are on and hopefully we can help them get straightened out.

CHIEF GRAY: Getting back to D.A. Blodgett for a minute. He actually has a program in place, a diversionary program

for drug addicts. SO, he's actually taken a lot of positive steps to make things work for us. I don't have a program in the town of North Andover, so we use the D.A.'s office. He's doing a fantastic job.

Duggan asked the chiefs if they see any spillover crimes being so close to Lawrence and if the increase in opioid use in the Valley has spiked their numbers in other violent crimes like domestic violence or armed robberies.

CHIEF GRAY: "We don't see those, per se, because the secondary crimes we are witnessing are; larcenies the breaking-and-enterings, the car breaks and those kinds of crimes. The only time we see a lot of violence when it's drug related is like when we go into a department store and they get caught, and they know they have warrants and they know they are going to jail for a few days and they know they aren't going to be able to use their drugs, they run. They fight and they make a break for it because it's better than getting caught. So any situation where they know they are going to get caught, they know they aren't going to be able to get high. The withdrawal from this drug is so powerful that to them it's worth it. That's the sad part of it. If you've ever seen someone detox in a cell for a little while, it's awful to watch.

CHIEF DENARO: My answer is entirely different. Ours are mostly gang related violence as the result of drugs. Our gangs are interchangeable with Lawrence. They freely go back and forth between communities. You are now even starting to see them going to Amesbury a little bit, but predominantly when it gets hot in Lawrence they come to Haverhill. When it's hot in Haverhill they go to Lawrence. A lot of the shootings that we've had are over drug disputes or people who didn't pay, or drug shipments that were misdirected and that type of thing. When gangs disrespect each other it leads to significant problems and a lot of them are drug related. So, our violence is significant as the result of gangs and drugs."

DUGGAN: Are you seeing that the gangs are becoming more violent and more prevalent on the streets of Haverhill like they are in Lawrence? Are you seeing major gangs?

CHIEF DENARO: I think we are; I think it's safe to say that it seems that the gang members we are dealing with today, as opposed to even a decade or 15 years ago, there seems to be less regard for human life. They don't seem to value life. It's nothing for them to take a gun and shoot

into somebody's house. The scary part is that there's no value for human life and that's very frightening for us.

CHIEF RITER: We see some on the traffic stops with motor vehicle issues that come through the town. What we do see is more service calls for the family. Going back to the other topic for a minute on the mandatory hold (for narcen recipients), I think it's good for these families. What we see is families get someone home and try to handle the problem in the home setting and when that doesn't work, they need a next step to get that person [help]. The hold gets them out of the house and gives the family a break also. A lot of times when we are talking to the families they say they don't know where to turn next. They've tried certain programs, they've tried different things and they just need someone to give them help also.

Duggan asked each chief if they could educate the public with one thing people aren't talking about what would it be.

CHIEF SOLOMON: I actually talked to a couple of real estate agents who said they are have a problem with people coming through and going through people's medicine cabinets at home showings. As people are going through the homes they are going through medicine cabinets. So not only should you not have opioids in your medicine cabinet but you should have it locked up somewhere. I always say to people, you have to have situational awareness with your family. People always say after, 'Oh, I knew something was wrong with my Lisa or Johnny'. So, I say to parents 'as soon as you see a behavioral change, a sudden change in friends, any change to their personal situation take note and be aware of it. And then you take it to the next step of exploring options and don't feel bad about going through their room when they're not at home.

CHIEF RITER: "If you know you have a problem in your family, reach out. Understand that there's a lot of people going through this problem. Make sure you reach out to a police professional, or someone who might be able to help. Get some early information.

CHIEF DENARO: One of the things I have seen personally is that we've gone out and reached out to families of young people we knew were addicted. The families pushed us away. They want to handle it themselves, they want it to be quiet. My advice to these people who ... you know in one particular case the individual was dead

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

THE VALLEY PATRIOT BASH IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Next month, The Valley Patriot will celebrate our 14th anniversary with our annual BASH (March 23rd at the Relief's In, in Lawrence). Our emcee this year will be Army Vet and Law Enforcement Officer Toni Wakester who donated her time again this year to help us out. Join us as we honor police, firefighters, veterans and give out scholarships to local high school seniors from the Voke and Lawrence High as well as Methuen and North Andover. Special guests include Essex County Sheriff Kevin Coppinger, movie producer and musician Daryl C. Silva, Secretary of Veterans Services Francisco Urena, Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera, Prospect Hill Mastermind Mark Roberge, weatherman Al Kaprielian, Boston's Best Comedian Johnny Joyce, and so many more! Get your tickets on Eventbrite.com!

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LIES PREVAIL AT N. ANDOVER TOWN MEETING

I've said it before and I will say it again. I respect people who have an honest disagreement on issues. What I do not respect are people who lie and distract the voters with propaganda to achieve a political end. So was the case at North Andover Town Meeting last month when voters were asked to decide the fate of a marijuana growing and research facility at Osgood Landing on Route 125. Opponents of the growing facility lined up at the microphone and took turns, one after another using scare tactics to oppose the plan. One doctor brought slides showing what marijuana does to teen agers brains extoling the dangers of pot use. Another resident talked about pot as a "gateway drug" that leads kids to take harder drugs like opioids. All of this was a distraction as the question before the voters was not the legalization of marijuana for recreational use, but a research and growing facility for medical marijuana. Some opponents used scare tactics like claiming that the facility was going to drain

Lake Cochichewick, bogus traffic concerns and one person even spread the rumor that kids would be able to purchase marijuana at the facility. None of it was true of course, but that didn't stop the liars and demagogues from spouting these talking points anyway. By opposing the facility, North Andover voters just rejected a \$5 million boom for the town budget, most of which was going to go to our public school system. I say, the board of selectmen should now introduce a \$5M override to make up for the loss of revenue. If they do that, I will be the very first person to support it.

TELEVISION YOUR MEETINGS!

Jan 1 to Jan 29	2017	2018	Raw Change	% Change
Murder	1	0	-1	-100%
Rape	0	0	0	UNC
Robbery	17	8	-9	-53%
Agg. Assault	27	25	-2	-7%
Res. Burglary	18	6	-12	-67%
Comm. Burglary	9	7	-2	-22%
Larceny +250	38	21	-17	-45%
Auto Theft	47	23	-24	-51%

The Methuen City Council last month held a budget meeting that was not televised. The excuses we heard from councilors was that it was a "working meeting" for new councilors to understand the budget and the budget process. But, this is a public board, making decisions about public money in a public municipality. The voters have every right to be able to watch how their city council does business. Shame on the Methuen Council for coming up with ANY reason not to televise one of their meetings. Who knows what kind of deals were made in that meeting.

LANTIGUA, DEVERS FACE OFF AGAIN

Heeeeee's BAAACK! Yes Former State Representative and former Mayor Willie Lantigua is running for his old seat in the legislature as is Marcos Devers who defeated Lantigua four years ago. With Juana Mattias, (the current rep.) running for congress and not seeking reelection this is an open seat that could return Devers or Lantigua to The State House. Strap in kids, this is going to get really dirty, really fast!

FINEGOLD SEEKS SENATE SEAT

Former State Rep. Barry Finegold is by far the frontrunner in the State Senate race to replace Barbara L'Italian (who is vacating her seat to run for congress). Finegold has a ton of money and a political network second to none in that district. His failed run for state treasurer won't hurt his campaign even a little, in fact it might even help him as he widened his base of local support to a statewide political network. Anyone else running in this race should just save their money and step aside as I don't see anyone beating Barry.

PAVEL IS GIVING IT A SHOT!

With Finegold in the race it seems silly to even talk about any other candidate, but Lawrence City Councilor Pavel Payano is rumored to be running for State Senate just days after taking office as a freshman city councilor. Pavel will campaign hard and he will take votes away from Finegold (especially Latino votes) but at the end of the day it's almost impossible to beat Barry in the rest of this district. As a side note, if Pavel does run he sends a very strong signal to the voters that they wasted their time voting for him to represent them on the council just a few short months ago. Voters are tired of politicians running for and achieving an elected position, only to vacate that position to move up the political ladder.

JEN KANNAN AND THAT DAN KOH ENDORSEMENT

So, I was under the impression that Methuen Councilor Jen Kannan was a friend and as such she knows that there is no venom involved when I get snarky about the political decisions local pols make, friend or no friend. I was wrong about that. Last month I saw a posting on Facebook that Kannan was supporting Dan Koh for congress and knowing how Jen feels about illegal aliens, I made the mistake of thinking that if Kannan was supporting a democrat like Koh, he must care more about American citizens than illegal aliens. So, without thinking I posted "I'M IN" ... why not support a democrat this year who is against illegal aliens and will challenge his own party on the issue. Except, when I did a little research I was shocked to find that Koh is just another democrat robot who spews the talking points and advocates for illegal aliens over American citizens. So, as I do with any politician who does something unexpected, I poked fun at her in this notebook knowing that, as a friend, Kannan would laugh it off as Nick DiZoglio and even Dan Rivera do when I poke fun at them. Boy was I wrong about that!

Instead of taking my light hearted ribbing for what it was, Kannan painted a picture on Facebook of an EVIL Tom Duggan who "attacked" her "filled with venom" in order to destroy her political image. Seriously. You would think that I ran over her puppy and burned down her house. Here's the kicker. She should know better. If she was really the friend she pretends to be, she never would have attacked my motives as if I was "out to get her". Nonetheless, I should have known how sensitive the councilor is and held my criticism of her endorsement, light-hearted or not, until I had something substantive to criticize. I'm sorry I hurt your feelings Jen. But, I'm even more sorry that she really knows nothing about me if she



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could jump so quickly to a conclusion that my notebook item about her was "venomous". Live and learn I say. I just wonder how she's going to react when I have to take her to task someday for something serious.

LEARN TO LISTEN!

You see it on TV when watching CNN or Fox, a liberal and a conservative trying to have a conversation about issues of the day. But, as soon as the conservative points out their position, the liberal immediately talks over them to accuse him/her of being racist, or attacking someone, or attacking ALL of some group when that is not what the person was saying. But, that's legitimately what the liberal heard. Part of the problem is that ideological liberals (you can tell who they are; they HATE Trump) don't actually listen to what other people are saying. They never bother to ask someone what they mean when the liberal is offended. They just assume the other person's motive and immediately start yelling "racist" or "Nazi" or some other labeler stereotype. Liberals are only liberal because they have

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

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been stripped of their ability (usually in college) to hear what someone is actually saying. They are “triggered” by certain words and phrases which stops all rational discussion. They assume a “venomous” intent about what the speaker “Really means” despite his actual words. This always leads to the end of the discussion with each side calling names and walking away learning nothing about each other or the rational for the opposing view. That is why it’s impossible to get anything done in politics today. Both sides are talking past each other because both sides are speaking a different language.

VFW ANNOUNCES 2017-2018 MA VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Katrina L. Schell from Wilmington, a sophomore at Lexington Christian Academy, was recently named the first place winner in the statewide VFW – Massachusetts Voice of Democracy Scholarship Program. Katrina, the daughter of Kristi and David Schell, was sponsored by VFW Post 8164 of Tewksbury, MA, which also sponsored the winner of the 2016-2017 Massachusetts State contest.

The Voice of Democracy competition provides high school students with the opportunity to speak out on freedom and democracy. The program has been popular and successful since its beginning in 1947, and the VFW is proud to continue offering it to America’s young people.

The Voice of Democracy is a worldwide audio-essay competition that requires entrants to write and record a 3 to 5 minute essay on a patriotic-based theme. This year’s theme was “American History: Our Hope for the Future”. Katrina’s winning entry is titled “History’s Hope Today.” As one of 54 finalists worldwide, Katrina will travel to Washington, D.C. on March 3rd to compete at the national level for the first place prize of a \$30,000 college scholarship.

The National Association of Broadcasters started the Voice of Democracy Scholarship Program in 1947. The VFW became a national sponsor in the late 1950s and assumed sole responsibility for the program in 1961. The competition was created to provide students in grades 9 – 12 the opportunity to express themselves relative to democratic ideas and principles. Around 40,000 students participate in the contest each year, and the VFW awards more than \$2 million in scholarships every year.

NEW MOON COFFEE HOUSE

Susie Burke and David Surette perform at to the New Moon Coffeehouse in Haverhill on Saturday February 17th at 8:00 pm. Quentin Callewaert opens the evening. The coffeehouse is located in the Universalist Unitarian Church, 16 Ashland St, Haverhill MA. Admission to the show is \$20; \$10 for those ages 18 and under. Tickets for this show are available at the door starting around 6:30; doors open at 7:30. Tickets may be reserved prior to the show by visiting www.newmooncoffeehouse.org, or by calling 978-459-5134.

The last time Susie and David performed at the New Moon was in 1992, when they opened for Greg Brown. Come see this amazing duo on February 17.

The easiest way to get to the New Moon Coffeehouse is to take Rte. 495 to exit 51A (Route 125 South). Stay on Route 125 South for about 1.5 miles. At intersection of Routes 125 & 110, look left for a red brick church. Turn left onto Kenoza Ave. (aka Rte 110). Then first right by UHaul trucks, and right onto Ashland St. There are 2 parking lots available behind the church, on both sides of Ashland St. The coffeehouse entrance is also there, at the back of the church.

PLANT SALE IN WESTFORD

The Middlesex Conservation District will hold its annual Spring Plant Sale on

Friday 4/27 (3-6pm) and Saturday 4/28 (8am-noon) at Kimball Farm, 400 Littleton Rd, Westford, MA. All items may be ordered in advance through March 31st; to place an order please visit our website at www.middlesexconservation.org or call 978 692 9395 to request a catalog. The sale includes tree/shrub seedlings, perennials, fruits, groundcovers and garden supplies. All sale proceeds benefit our environmental programs, protecting soils and waters in Middlesex County.

MASS DEP FINES LOWELL COMPANY - MassDEP Inspection Later Reveals Improper Storage of Hazardous Materials

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) penalized Triumvirate Environmental \$101,000 for response actions it initiated following a January 5, 2016 release from a 55-gallon tank of the solvent trichloroethylene (TCE) at the company’s Lowell facility. Triumvirate is a licensed hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facility (TSDF) located at 263 Howard Street in Lowell.

Triumvirate staff unloaded a punctured hazardous waste container of TCE while off-loading a vehicle, causing a release to the environment. Triumvirate staff notified MassDEP of the release, but the facility failed to obtain written permission prior to resuming its TSDF operations and failed to inspect the waste containers on this particular transportation vehicle prior to unloading.

“Triumvirate has a responsibility as a licensed hazardous waste TSDF to properly train its staff to adequately manage its waste deliveries and address spill requirements in the event of a release incident,” said Eric Worrall, director of MassDEP’s Northeast Regional Office in Wilmington. “Ensuring public safety and protecting critical environmental resources is of utmost importance and needs to be a top priority.”

In addition to the release incident, a subsequent inspection by MassDEP on September 15, 2016 observed incompatible hazardous waste containers being stored next to each other without any means of physical separation. Triumvirate has agreed to correct all the violations and will pay \$52,000 of the penalty, with the remaining \$49,000 suspended provided the company corrects all the violations and remains in compliance for two years.

OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE RAPS SALEM STATE, BILLERICA SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Salem State University used staff time, email lists and a computer to send an email in 2017 that addressed, in part, the re-election of Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll, and appeared to promote the passage of a statewide ballot question. The university sent follow-up emails, prior to OCPF involvement, recognizing that the original email should not have addressed those election issues. The campaign finance law prohibits the use of public resources for political campaign purposes. ALSO, the Billerica School Department used public e-mail to send an informational communication to parents regarding a Dec. 2, 2017 town ballot question to influence their vote. The campaign finance law prohibits the use of public resources for campaign purposes but the OCPF did not fine or punish either of the two bad actors above. How are we supposed to expect public officials to stop breaking the law when they blatantly use public resources to affect a political campaign and suffer no consequences?

NECC OFFERS CNA/HOME HEALTH AID COURSE - Classes for Northern Essex Community College’s noncredit nurse assistant/home health aide program will now be held on the Haverhill campus. This five-week, full-time day program will be offered twice during the win-

NOTEBOOK: PAGE 19



State Rep.’s New Novel “Boston sort -of Legal” Features Some Familiar Characters

Massachusetts State Rep. Lenny Mirra (R-Newbury) unveiled his new novel “Boston sort-of Legal” on Tom Duggan’s Paying Attention! Podcast (watch it on YouTube). Mirra says that all of the characters in the political novel “are fictional except one, Tom Duggan, the ace reporter who roots out corrupt politicians.” A quick read through the first few chapters however, might lead you to believe the main character “Kelly” is modeled after a real life politician, none other than Methuen State Rep. Diana DiZogio. Other local politicians are easily recognizable as well. You can get the book on Amazon.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Rebuild Our Depleted Military

The Budget Control Act of 2011 necessitated budget cuts for the Defense Department which had a huge negative effect on the readiness of our military.

I quote from Alan Dowd’s article in the February 2018 issue of The American Legion Magazine.

“In 2011, the Air Force had 333,370 active duty airmen. By 2017, it had fallen to 310,000. In 2013, 31 squadrons stood down. In 2014 500 planes were to be eliminated. Just 12 percent of America’s aging bomber fleet will be able to penetrate and survive enemy air defenses.”

“In 2011, the Army’s active-duty end strength was 566,000; by 2016, it had fallen to 476,000. Only 25 percent of the Army’s combat aviation brigades are ready to deploy. Of the Army’s 58 brigade combat teams, only three could be called

upon to fight tonight.”

“Before sequestration, the Marine Corps fielded 202,100 active-duty personnel; by the end of 2016 there were only 184,000 Marines. By the end of 2016; only 41 percent of Marine aircraft were able to fly.”

“Today’s Navy has only 277 active deployable ships. According to former CNO Adm. Jonathan Greenert, we need a Navy of 450 ships. Fifty-three percent of Navy aircraft cannot fly.”

We need to fund the Defense Department with adequate budgets, probably on the order of \$700 billion to \$750 billion per year to rebuild our military and meet our national security requirements. President Trump is on board with the funding needs.

Donald Moskowitz
Londonderry NH

Pina Prinzivalli: “I’ll Never Vote Myself a Pay Raise;” Will Donate Salary Increases to Charity

TEWKSBURY, MA...On the one year anniversary of State Representative Jim Miceli’s vote to give himself and his colleagues \$18,000,000 worth of pay raises, Republican candidate Pina Prinzivalli announced that if elected, she will never vote herself a pay raise and will donate future increases to her base pay to charity.

“January 25th is a happy anniversary for Mr. Miceli, but not for the taxpayers,” said Prinzivalli, who formally announced her candidacy this past October. “I’m running to make our future, our priority. I’m not running to be a career politician who seeks financial perks for myself off the backs of working families in Massachusetts.”

On January 25, 2017, State Rep. Miceli voted to increase his ‘office expenses’ and stipends. An increase to his base salary had already been determined in December of 2016, due to an increase in the state’s median household income, thanks to a 1998 constitutional amendment. Between base salary, office expense, and stipends,

State Rep. Miceli saw a 23.1% jump in pay.

“Mr. Miceli was already getting a raise in base pay when he voted to add even more taxpayer dollars to his pocket. As your next State Representative, I won’t do that. In addition to voting against a pay raise for myself, anytime there’s an increase to the base pay due to the constitutional amendment, I will donate the additional money to charity,” said Prinzivalli.

Following State Rep. Miceli’s January 25, 2017 vote for the pay raises, he proceeded to support a constitutional amendment to introduce a graduated income tax in the Commonwealth (Vote- June 14, 2017). In 2016, he voted to protect funding for Sanctuary Cities (Vote- April 25, 2016).

“These three votes hurt the taxpayers of Wilmington and Tewksbury. That’s why it’s time to make our future, our priority.”

Not Your Stepping Stone

Kathy Runge

VALLEY PATRIOT LAWRENCE COLUMNIST

The first month of our new council has come and gone and the Personnel and Ordinance Committees have no permanent heads, since all members of the committee were not present at the initial meetings. I'm taking bets as to when all members will be present to elect their leaders. School vacation is coming and we could have bad weather, so it may be some time.

Newly elected Councilor De La Cruz wants to establish an Education Committee. What's the purpose of this? Almost anything sent to this committee would have to be sent to one of the other existing committees as well, just slowing down the process.

Would the Education Committee be a shadow School Committee? If there is an item before the council regarding education and a councilor is interested in it, they should do their job and attend the appropriate committee meeting to air their views.

Given some of our councilors abysmal track record for attendance at committee meetings, I would think twice before creating another one.

When an election is pending in this town, one tried and true campaign tactic is to wait until hours before the election and cry racism against any Anglo opponent. This occurred again the day of the council's organizational meeting.

A Facebook poster said councilors should not vote for Councilor Laplante who, along with Councilor Rodriguez, was running for Vice Chair, as he was a racist. They then went on, claiming the only other Anglo councilor was a Trump loving Republican who hated Hispanics.

Mayor Rivera and Councilors Vasquez, Rodriguez, De Pena, and De La Cruz were tagged in this post. Would you like to know how many of them cared enough to denounce this comment? You know the answer.

The council voted to accept a homeless grant when it was made clear that

the funds could be restricted to Lawrence residents. I find this confusing, since immigrants are placed at the top of the public housing list above Lawrence residents and the council doesn't complain about that at all.

Stepping Stones: Lawrence is the official stepping stone for any politician with aspirations for higher office. We're easy pickings. It's easy to play the part of benevolent leader, just shovel other people's money our way. And haven't they done such a good job?

State Representative Juana Matias moved here so she could help us. She didn't get half way through her term at the State House before abandoning that position to run for Congress. That's better than her 2013 stint as a member of the Haverhill Board of Registrars. She was appointed in January and turned in her letter of resignation in February, stating she didn't have the necessary time to devote to the position.

This begs the question, exactly what does the Haverhill Board of Registrars do that requires so much time? Could they give the Lawrence board a clue? The only time our board does anything is during recalls and recounts and I don't think that Haverhill has had many of those.

Mayor Rivera is getting lots of television face time talking about how President Trump hates immigrants. He appeared on NECN before the State of the Union address, ending that appearance by saying he would be afraid, as would any person with his name, if Trump's administration called him.

What would Mayor Rivera's response be If I said that I would be afraid, as would any person with my name, to walk the streets of Lawrence? How about I would be crazy, as would any person with my name, to buy a house in Lawrence? What is your response, Mayor Rivera?

Pavel Payano wasn't even sworn in to his position of Councilor at Large before he announced his run for State Senate. Time to go until next month, I'm feeling a little trodden upon.

Human Trafficking Victims Expanding Homeless Counts

Joe D'Amore

VALLEY PATRIOT GROVELAND COLUMNIST

Homeless population counts are now underway nationally and throughout the state sponsored by HUD and state agencies tasked with the annual census process. The goal is to identify not only numbers of homeless people but also concentrations of them so that resources and affordable housing efforts can be aligned for them. This of course is the theory in the most general terms.

But homelessness in almost any community is virtually intractable with affordable housing being the single impact driver. Add to that other dynamics such as insufficient mental health resources, substance abuse and the inability of thousands of people to secure stable employment with sufficient incomes to sustain themselves; and the problem is beyond the scope of most communities to eradicate it.

A growing homeless sub set are alien victims of human trafficking. Quite literally, people are being forced into the shadows of our communities, living outdoors, living in homeless shelters and rotating throughout a network of them, or just staying at a friend or relatives home without formal occupancy status just so they can stay invisible.

There are several forms of human trafficking : Notably, victims of sexual , domestic and even employment servitude are controlled by criminals who perpetually promote the threat of reporting an undocumented alien if they breach their confidence. Add to this sexual assault and domestic violence victims and conditions are ripe for people to run away and hide somewhere.

The national headlines don't help to alleviate the problem. With the current administration's surge in aggressive enforcement of inadequate immigration laws , the confrontational stances of local communities and federal agencies over sanctuary status and local police departments in an influx of what their role should be, flight of frightened people is increasing. This social disorganization is creating an invisible population.

A degree of relief though is remarkably available from The US Department of Homeland Security . Victims can often be the only gateway to identify and apprehend perpetrators of horrendous human trafficking crimes. The DHS recognizes that encouraging victims to come forward and support them with social services for safety, stability and eventual recovery is a critical component to conducting a successful investigation and prosecuting criminals.

Victims also have rights even if they are complicit in illegal activity such as forced or voluntary entry into the country. Victim Centered Resources are administered regionally by HSI (Homeland Security

Investigation) representatives. The DHS has numerous hotlines for information and also safe crime-tipping. This creates a marvelous opportunity for advocates, social workers, teachers, faith-based organizations and non-government/ non-profit agencies to "broker" terms between victims and federal agencies.

The DHS has an Immigration Relief program that specifically aims to stabilize foreign national victims of crime through a program called ; The Blue Campaign.

These are the basic types of immigration relief 1) Continued Presence (CP) which is a form of relief where deportation is stayed if an eligible victim is part of an active investigation of a crime initiated by local police departments.

2) T or U Nonimmigrant Status also known as T or U Visa: These are longer term arrangements for waiver of deportation. T Visas are based in human trafficking and V Visas are based in a variety of domestic abuses , offenses and related serious crimes.

3) Public benefits are available to T and U Visa holders and in particular minor victims (under 18) are eligible for federal emergency resources.

4) Declaration or Certification by Law Enforcement. Local law enforcement agencies play a leading role in verifying victim status and declaring a victim eligible for protections.

Attorneys and he afore-mentioned social organizations have an opportunity to assist victims by not only assisting with application forms but also building a bridge of communication with local police. In doing so many individuals will be placed on pathways to emerge from the shadows. In fact, many T and U Visa holders eventually gain citizenship. The process is often initially tenuous but it must always start with a trusted relationship somewhere; a church volunteer, Pro-Bono- oriented attorney, social worker , even a teacher paying attention to clues of distress in a student. Working with local police who are interested in helping victims can open up doors for stabilization.

In the end, homeless population counts can begin subtracting victims of human trafficking and the ultimate goal which is set by the Department of Homeland Security - of making our communities safer -can be realized. If we tune out the contentious noise in the media and pay attention we can all contribute to addressing serious societal problems in constructive ways.

Please seek more information through: www.uscis.gov/humantrafficking & HSI Tipline: 1-866-347-2423

Joe D'Amore is a homeless advocate and founder of Merrimack Valley Hope Mission

Please contact him for more information: damorecos@gmail.com

Two Lawrence Men Among 3 Gang Members Charged With Gun Running

State, local and federal law enforcement charged three members of the Latin Gangsta (sic) Disciples with illegal gun running Friday.

26 year old Jose Illaraza of Newburyport (AKA "Kae-Kae"), Bryan Torres-Almanzar, (AKA FLEX) 19, of Lawrence, and 22 year old Eric Valentin (AKA Jefe) also of Lawrence were charged with illegally dealing firearms without a license, and conspiracy to deal firearms without a license.

The three men were arrested Friday in Nashua, NH and detained following an appearance in federal court in Boston.

Illaraza is in state custody for an unrelated offense.

"I am grateful for the hard work and

resources of the United States Attorney Andrew Lelling's office," said Lawrence Police Chief Roy Vasque, "and Mickey Leadingham, Special Agent in charge of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) Boston Field Division, and his agent brought to this case. Federal and state partnerships, as in this case, with the ATF, will continue to be part of the Lawrence Police Department's strategic plan going forward to combat gun and gang violence."

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera said that today's development was a "huge step forward in combating gun violence". Rivera called Illaraza, Torres, and Valentin "dangerous individuals "and stated he was glad they were in custody.



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Lawrence’s Chief Vasque at The State House

Newly appointed police Chief Roy Vasque (center) with Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera and State Representative Diana DiZoglio at The State House last week as The City of Lawrence received \$214,700 in funding, while the cities of Methuen and Haverhill will share \$130,000. Additionally, UMass Lowell has received \$98,858, including \$26,953 to the Haverhill/Methuen site, \$26,953 to the Lawrence site and \$44,952 to the Lowell site.

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Lawrence’s Rep. Moran Secures \$700K for More Lawrence Police

State Representative Frank A. Moran (D—Lawrence) today announced that a state grant the Representative filed in the state budget has resulted in almost three quarters of a million dollars in increased funding to hire more police officers in the City of Lawrence. This year was the fifth that Rep. Moran has filed this amendment to the state budget, which has resulted in Lawrence receiving \$700,000 in grant money.

“I would like to thank my colleagues Rep. DiZoglio and Rep. Matias for co-sponsoring as well as Senator L’Italien for her support in the Senate,” said State Representative Frank Moran.

“As a strong supporter of our city’s law enforcement, I believe the funds awarded to the Lawrence Police Department will be an effective method in maintaining stability in the department and will ensure that Lawrence attracts and retains its best officers and increases our overall safety and security,” said State Representative Juana Matias.

Proactive measures from this funding could include directed patrols based

upon crime analysis and using community policing problem-solving to address community concerns. Additionally, these funds can be used to hire police recruits within and beyond this fiscal year.

In past years, the grant program has been very successful in Lawrence. The funds have allowed the city to hire additional police officers and it has seen a corresponding decrease in crime.

“This important funding will greatly help the Lawrence Police Department in its efforts to hire new officers and continue to promote public safety in our communities,” said State Representative Diana DiZoglio.

The grant, administered by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, assists cities that spend less than \$200 per capita on its police department. Any funds awarded must be spent on restoring laid off sworn officers, retaining officers that would otherwise be laid off, restoring staffing levels due to attrition and other reasons, restoring or retaining civilian employees, or restoring enforcement-related overtime staffing.



State Rep., Diana DiZoglio appears on the Paying Attention! Podcast with Tom Duggan to talk about issues facing her district.

Rep. DiZoglio To Push Mandating Detox Time for Narcan Recipients

Methuen State Representative Diana DiZoglio says she is ready to draft and introduce legislation which would require drug addicts who are given the life-saving drug NARCAN, to be committed for 15 – 30 days in a detox or treatment facility. DiZoglio made the revelation on Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan’s Paying Attention TV Podcast.

Narcan is a drug used by first responders on people who die of an opioid overdose. Once administered, Narcan literally brings the overdose victim back from the dead.

Police chiefs from four communities appeared on the program previously and said the one thing that the legislature could do to help the opioid crisis is mandatory treatment for addicts.

“I asked them all,” Duggan told DiZoglio, “if you could wave a magic wand and get some help from the legislature on

this opioid crisis, what would it be? They said, ‘listen when we go out there and Narcan someone they go to the hospital and they can check themselves out, and three hours later we are Narcanning them again. If the legislature could pass a law making it mandatory for 15-30 days to go get treatment, it gives the families a break, it gives the cops a break, and it gives the person’s body a chance to detox. Is that something you would introduce for our chiefs and our cops?’”

“Absolutely, and I did previously introduce something similar to that with Chief Solomon. So, I am in full agreement with all the chiefs who said that. Too many times what happens is that you have somebody go in, they have the issue with overdosing, they wake them up, get them out of the overdose, and as soon as they can get up on their own two feet, they are out there looking for that high again.”



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Political Correctness Doesn’t Help the Homeless!

Peter Larocque
PAYING ATTENTION COLUMNIST

God Bless you and Happy New Year! It is great to be back for an exciting 2018 writing about the Goodness of God!

Just the other day after work I sat in my chair and began to click away with my TV remote. Then I came across the rebroadcast of a Lawrence City Council meeting and the topic of discussion was homelessness and how does one measure success helping the homeless. Then one of our esteemed City Councilors, attempting to make a heartfelt statement, quoted from what he called the good book, he said, “The good book says the Homeless we will always have”.

First, he got the name of the book wrong and then the quote as well. Upon hearing the misquote , I automatically knew what he was referring to. But to the readers who may not, please allow me to clarify.

There are many “good books” like, Destined to Reign and Unmerited Favor, The Power of Right Believing, Grace Revolution, Live The Let-Go-Life, all by Pastor Joseph Prince. But being familiar with what The Councilor was trying to say, I knew he was referring to “The Holy Bible”.

Why the City Councilor was reluctant to say, “The Holy Bible says” just made me sad because if there was ever a time to be very clear it is now! Being “Politically Correct” at a Lawrence City Council meeting when talking about Homelessness doesn’t help anybody!

Next was the attempt to quote from the Holy Bible which the Councilor also got all wrong. Here is what Jesus actually said which is written in the Gospel of John 12:8, “For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.” Jesus said, “The POOR you will always have”, He did not say the HOMELESS you will always have. There is a difference! Not all poor people are homeless and I am sure plenty of poor people expect their City Councilors to know that! Who do they think is living in Low Income Housing or Public Housing?

My unsolicited advice, please in the future when you take upon yourself to quote Scripture make sure you are speaking accurately! Speaking truth boldly is what is really going to help people. We read in Acts 14:3, “Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.” When God’s Word was spoken without hesitation by the Apostle Paul and Barnabas, signs and wonders were done and the people really got set free!

Now having said all this, do I believe the City Councilor who misspoke did it maliciously? Absolutely not! Most likely this was spoken without much forethought at all. The subject matter of homelessness is a very emotional and sensitive subject, especially when trying to measure success! Attempting to approach this subject without having empathy, [the ability of putting oneself in the other person’s shoes], makes any effort seem like just the

compiling of statistics as it did at the City Council meeting.

It would be good to take our lead from Jesus who demonstrated empathy, The Bible calls it compassion. Here’s an example of the Compassion of Jesus Christ which we read about in Mark 1:40-42, “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. 42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.” Jesus went above and beyond what this leper asked for; Jesus not only cleansed the leper from leprosy but also touched him! He most likely hadn’t been touched in years and Jesus’ touch removed the Stigma that accompanied leprosy!

Jesus separated people from the problem; he didn’t allow the stigma of the situation to define them! We also need to read 1 John 3:17-18, “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

Do I think we can provide help to the homeless? Yes, but only with having compassion without judgment and condemnation! College degrees alone cannot instill in someone real compassion for the homeless. The love of God in Christ Jesus

must be in manifestation to see this kind of compassion!

Jesus set the standard of how to help people regardless of their condition. We read about Jesus leveling the playing field for everyone in John 15:13, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus also said the following in Matthew 11:28-30, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Maybe success could be measured by simply channeling the funds provided to helping one person at a time with acquiring a bed and a roof over their head. But this, will take rolling up one’s sleeves and doing it!

Homelessness along with The Opioid Epidemic and other domestic issues that are plaguing our communities have only one real solution and that is coming to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ! He is the only one who can save to the uttermost! Hebrews 7:24-25, tells us “But this man, [Jesus Christ] because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Love to you all,
Peter Larocque,

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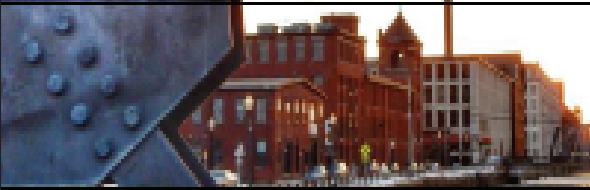



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From The Statehouse to the Valley Patriot

BENEATH THE SURFACE

Legislation Targets Increased Cancer Rates Among Firefighters

Rep. Linda Dean Campbell
VALLEY PATRIOT LAWRENCE COLUMNIST

This session I have filed a number of pieces of legislation pertaining to pressing public safety issues across the Commonwealth. I would like to highlight the following bill that I filed that just received a public hearing and excellent support from the committee and the public safety community: H.3520, An Act establishing a municipal bulk purchasing program for industrial washing machines for fire departments. This legislation would create a bulk purchasing program for extractors, which are specialized washing machines that are used to clean and reduce toxins routinely and continuously absorbed in firefighter equipment and gear.

Firefighters are at an elevated risk for cancer due to the toxic mix of carcinogens they are exposed to when responding to most fires. The high temperatures greatly elevate absorption of the carcinogens into the skin and personal protective equipment of the responders. Boston's Fire commissioner Joseph Finn has been a firefighter for 32 years and every month he

learns of another member who has been diagnosed with cancer. Over his career he has known of nearly 200 colleagues who have died from cancer.

One issue that many municipalities face is that extractors are very expensive to purchase and can cost upwards of \$9,800. This program would allow cities and town to join together in purchasing the extractors at a reduced price, making extractors more accessible to a wider range of communities.

This legislation is the result of coordination with Fire Chiefs across Massachusetts, cancer experts, and the Executive Office of Public Safety and many advocacy groups. The bill has already received the support of the Fire Chiefs of Massachusetts and the Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts, as well as The Last Call Foundation whose founder, Kathy Crosby-Bell, who came to testify at the hearing. This measure will not solve this alarming trend of increased cancer rates among our firefighters but it is an important measure that can have great impact in reducing this unacceptable trend.

The Why of the Progressive Movement

Paul Murano
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

One of the more popular euphemisms of our day is the term "progressive". It is meant to have a positive connotation. Being a progressive is thought to mean being enlightened and open to the future. Is it true? Should we all become progressives? There are two important things to consider about this word, both of which make it deceiving.

First, notice that for the progressive the future is seen as a definite entity which he/she defines, and to which some people are open, while others resist. The former are the enlightened and they are "on the right side of history" while the others are on its "wrong side." It is seen as progress away from traditional thinking on basic issues.

Yet, in reality, there is no right or wrong side of history; only right or wrong choices and behaviors. We make history with our choices. Radical change is the sporadic norm in world history, often led by those with courage and vision to change its trajectory, which makes history difficult if not impossible to predict.

Secondly, the word "progress" itself is neutral. Its value depends on what one is progressing toward. Progressive tooth decay or cancer is not a good thing. Progressing in the wrong direction while driving gets you further from, not closer to, the destination.

This is the problem: 'progressive' ideology does not recognize an end, goal, or destination. Movement itself is its top value – but only if it is a movement in the opposite direction of what is traditionally known to be objective truth and goodness. There is no moral compass by which to judge this "progress" since good and evil are absent from its ideology; and this is mainly because of its aversion to truth and goodness.

Think about it. Extract justice from mercy, and truth from compassion, and you have contemporary Liberalism. Add in a dose of sarcasm and cynicism with personal attack, and you have Progressivism. Both stem from a refusal to submit to Reality - the first out of fear and the second out of anger.

Ever visit the Facebook page of a progressive friend? Chances are it will have

personal attack as its dominant theme. It is no coincidence that secular progressives as a rule disparage individuals rather than ideas, policies, or actions. Just watch any MSNBC evening show and you will see it within two minutes. It usually takes the form of ridicule and sarcasm. Currently the main target is Trump, but before that it was Bush, then Reagan, then Nixon. Sometimes it's a characterization of a "religious" person portrayed as racist, sexist, or anti-science. It is a way to channel hate, and is a universal phenomenon of the Left. But why? Let's go beneath the surface.

Hatred becomes the natural human condition in a post-Eden fallen world. It begins with hating sin and injustice, and since we succumb to our own imperfections, continues with hating self. This turns into anger, with an ironic combination of rationalizing one's own evil while blaming others for our misery. This condition demands a scapegoat, a way to channel one's own hate onto another in order to gain some semblance of peace, albeit a temporary and hollow one. This is a universal phenomenon found throughout history. Similarly, there is widespread animosity toward anyone that disagrees with the progressive agenda to make sin 'acceptable;' and the perceived leader of this opposition, often a conservative president, is routinely its target and scapegoat.

Christianity, however, provides the world with the one real Scapegoat to remedy this condition, the "Lamb of God." No longer is it necessary to hate oneself or others; in Christ's sacrifice hate and death are conquered. Yet, in rejecting Him we make our own 'progressive' retreat from Truth (Jn 14:6) and Love (1 Jn 4:8), and contribute to a culture of death. Ultimately, the 'progressive' movement is a movement away from God and His will, coupled with a deep aversion to His voice echoing throughout the centuries.

Dr. Paul Murano teaches philosophy at Rivier University and North Shore Community College and hosts Beneath the Surface radio show on 980 WCAP. Paul has a doctorate in marital theology, is certified in bioethics by the NCBC, and teaches adult ed. at St. Patrick's in Nashua. He is founder of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help in Burlington, and is a singer-songwriter-musician. E-mail Paul at PJDM@aol.com



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11 Yr. Old Cancer Victim Gets Royal Treatment by North Andover PD

Eleven year old Nathan Scanlon got the ride of his life last month when the North Andover Police and Cops for Kids with Cancer paid him and his family a visit in their Johnson Street home, lights and sirens blaring.

Nathan came out of his house to a line of police officers in his driveway, each giving him a high-five before he climbed into the front seat of a police car and led the procession of police cruisers to the police station.

“We are here today for an 11 year old kid with cancer,” North Andover Police Chief Charles Gray told The Valley Patriot.

“We are bringing him back to the station where we want to give him some items and try to make his life a little bit better.”

Arriving at the police station, Nathan and his family were brought into the back door “this is the door police officers use when we come to work” one officer told him. Once inside, Chief Gray thanked Nathan telling him that the police consider themselves pretty brave “but you are braver than all of us here today, we want you to know that”.

Nathan and his family were given a check from Cops for Kids with Cancer in the amount of \$5,000 to help them with some of the expenses associated with taking time out of work, travel into Boston for treatment, etc.

Stacy Abato, Vice President of Cops for Kids with Cancer told the Valley Patriot that her organization goes through a screening process to select families who have children with cancer.

She said that the families of kids with cancer are too often met with unexpected time out of work, transportation costs to and from treatment, and supplies needed at home for the child.

Chief Gray and Ed McNelley, a retired Boston Police Officer, also presented Nathan with some presents to brighten his day and talked about the importance of the Cops for Kids with Cancer program.

Over the years, Cops for Kids with Cancer has given more than \$2.5 million to families with children battling cancer ...no strings attached! To donate to Cops for Kids with Cancer go to copsforkidswithcancer.org.



Stacy Abato, Vice President of Cops for Kids with Cancer, 11 year old Nathan Scanlon, and North Andover Police Chief Charles Gray. Nathan was given a ride in a police cruiser to the station where he and his family were presented a check for \$5,000 and some needed items.

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Superintendent Gets High Marks from Methuen School Committee

DJ Deeb
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

I have written numerous times that the City of Methuen is truly fortunate to have Superintendent Judy Scannell at the helm as the leader of Methuen Public Schools. Members of the school committee completed their annual evaluations of Superintendent Scannell in December and as expected, Superintendent Scannell received high marks for her performance.

The Education Reform Act of 1993 mandated that school committees across the Commonwealth evaluate their school district superintendents on annual basis. In December, members of the Methuen school committee evaluated Superintendent Judy Scannell using the instrument recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is my belief that this instrument, like the tool used to evaluate teachers, does not do our

Superintendent justice, but she received glowing reviews nonetheless. To her credit, Superintendent Scannell insisted that the committee evaluate her using almost the same instrument used to evaluate teachers.

Superintendent Scannell was evaluated in four standards: (1) Instructional Leadership; (2) Management and Operations; (3) Family and Community Engagement; and (4) Professional Culture. She was rated using the following four indicators:

1 Point Unsatisfactory = Performance on a standard or overall has not significantly improved following a rating of Needs Improvement-or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard or overall and is considered inadequate, or both.

2 Points Needs Improvement/Developing = Performance on a standard or overall is below the requirements of a standard or overall but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at this time. Improvement is neces-

sary and expected.

3 Points Proficient – Proficient practice is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance.

4 Points Exemplary = A rating of Exemplary indicates that practice significantly exceeds Proficient and could serve as a model of practice regionally or statewide.

In the area of Instructional Leadership, Superintendent Scannell received an overall committee rating of 3.5.

In the area of Management and Operations, Superintendent Scannell received an overall committee rating of 3.8.

In the area of Family and Community Engagement, Superintendent Scannell received an overall committee rating of 3.7.

In the area of Professional Culture, Superintendent Scannell received an overall committee rating of 3.7.

The above review led to an overall performance rating of 3.675.

Congratulations to Superintendent Scannell on this excellent review. Parents and members of the community can attest to the fact that our Superintendent can be seen at nearly every Methuen Public Schools event. That means she is out and about nearly every night. It should also be noted that Superintendent Scannell has refused a cost of living raise for the past four years even though she is currently one of the lowest paid superintendents in the region. The taxpayers of Methuen are truly getting a bargain and real value with Superintendent Scannell.

Both the school committee and Superintendent Scannell are well aware that there is still much work to be done to increase Methuen’s raring from a Level 3 to a Level 2, and eventually a Level 1, school district with the state. We are all committed to making that happen. Resources are limited and the school committee is trying to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers at the same time.

Last year, in FY 2018, the School Department was the only major department in the city to reduce its operating budget. It cut its operating expenses by 2 percent. The School Department did receive a 3 percent increase in funding the year before mostly to cover mandated services. It should be noted that 81% of school dis-

tricts in the Commonwealth spend above state-mandated Foundation levels for their school systems. Historically, the City of Methuen has spent at or below Foundation levels.

In considering the Methuen schools’ budget, the following facts taken from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding Methuen schools should be noted:

- * Bottom 15% of districts for total per pupil expenditure
- * Bottom 9% of districts for per pupil expenditure for administration
- * Bottom 38% of districts for per pupil expenditure for guidance and school psychologists
- * Bottom 34% of districts for per pupil expenditure for classroom teachers and specialist teachers
- * Bottom 5% for per pupil expenditure for instructional materials, equipment, and technology
- * Bottom 20% for per pupil expenditure for operations and maintenance
- * Bottom 23% for per pupil expenditure for other teaching services

All things considered, the teachers and support staff are doing an excellent job educating and providing quality services to the students of Methuen Public Schools without user fees and bus fees. Not many surrounding districts can brag about the latter.

On a personal note, I want to thank members of the Methuen School Committee for unanimously voting to elect me Secretary of the school committee for the upcoming year. I also want to congratulate my colleague Nick DiZoglio and wish him well on his election to the Vice-Chair position.

D.J. Deeb is a Methuen resident and member of the Methuen School Committee. Deeb is an Adjunct Professor of History/Government at Bunker Hill Community College and an Adjunct Political Science Instructor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Deeb also serves as Social Studies Department Chair at Notre Dame High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts. He is the author of Israel, Palestine, and the Quest for Middle East Peace (University Press, 2013) and The Collapse of Middle East Peace (IUniverse, 2003).

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Bharani Padmanabhan, MD, PhD
MEDICAL CORRUPTION COLUMNIST

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Methuen’s Loretta Cooke is one such elite persona.

In November, Tom Duggan published his superb report from Lawrence District Court on the Halloween Day trial where Loretta tried to get a restraining order on me. Maura had not spoken in chambers to the judge, so he applied the law as required and threw Loretta out of court as she deserved.

Well, Maura soon corrected her error. I sued Loretta for libel. Case 1782CV01510. And Maura showed up to defend her friend at public expense in a private libel case about Loretta lying to Methuen Police claiming that I am mentally unstable and stalked her with a handgun. Loretta committed a crime under MGL ch. 269 Section 13A.

Maura declared that her friend lied to Methuen Police in the course of her official duties at the state medical board and so the AG must defend Loretta at public expense.

One can argue that, this far, Maura Healey was merely engaged in discretionary decision-making. After all, the AG can declare that pistol-whipping a customer in a bar on a Saturday night is within a state trooper’s official duties but a Colonel reprimanding a trooper for including a judge’s daughter’s statements is not within the Colonel’s official duties.

Discretionary, get it?

Just like Martha Coakley never prosecuted Jared Remy for raping 14-year old Tiffany Guyette. She cared deeply about women and children, our Martha. Naturally the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus honored her with an award after Remy then murdered a woman.

But here is where Loretta joined the truly elite. Maura broke a specific state law when she spent tax money to defend Loretta in my private libel lawsuit in civil court.

At some point when we actually supported checks and balances on the AG, our legislature passed a statute that bans the AG from representing state employees at tax payers’ expense in libel cases.

MGL chapter 258, Section 10. The provisions of sections one to eight, inclusive, shall not apply to:

(c) any claim arising out of an intentional tort, including assault, battery, false imprisonment, false arrest, intentional mental distress, malicious prosecution, malicious abuse of process, libel, slander, misrepresentation, deceit, invasion of privacy, interference with advantageous relations or interference with contractual relations

Maura undeniably broke a specific law on behalf of her friend and co-defendant. Oh wait, I haven’t mentioned both friends are co-defendants in a federal racketeering lawsuit, have I? It is true.

Case 1:17-cv-11939.

I protested to Judge Rosalind Miller that Maura broke a specific law. Judge Miller ruled that she was perfectly okay with it. This is Massachusetts after all.

I sent certified mail to state officials responsible for governance. Just like Michigan State University’s in-house counsel Kristine Moore ignored Larry Nassar’s victims for years, they haven’t cared. I asked First Assistant AG Mary Strother to intervene as she must not be complicit with a clear statutory violation. I informed the AGO’s Counsel Richard Johnston that he must end statutory violations by the AG. I wrote to State Auditor Bump. All stayed silent.

State Treasurer Deborah Goldberg’s office told me they cannot block unlawful expenditures by the AG and that I should contact Comptroller Thomas Shack. I already had. His CTHRU website says Loretta is no longer a state employee. After two weeks of messages via email, certified mail and Twitter, the comptroller’s people finally wrote they could do nothing about the AG spending tax money to violate state law. That is why we spend \$8.8 million on the comptroller, get it?

I filed a criminal complaint with Essex County D.A Blodgett. It is just sitting there, soon to vanish.

What all these named state officials have made clear is one undeniable fact. The Massachusetts elite are untouchable and may break state law and spend tax dollars at will, and not one of these named officials will stand up and say ‘Stop breaking the law.’

Thanks to them all, Loretta now enjoys life amongst the Inner Party elite, with all three branches of state government committed to breaking a state law to protect her at public expense though she lied to the police.

Wouldn’t you like to be Maura’s friend too?

Bharani Padmanabhan MD PhD is a multiple sclerosis neurologist. On July 12, 2017 the state medical board stole his license because he reported Medicaid fraud to the government. scleroplex@gmail.com

BOSTON GLOBE: FROM 2

document the reasons for his impending firing, usually without severance payment.

This cruelty hardly ever happens to a truly incompetent employee. Incompetents who care little about anything work related make great so-called “group players” and are more likely moved to less demanding positions by employers than being fired. In short: incompetence and blindly “playing along” may be the best protection against being bullied at work.

But will the Globe expose all this to the public? Will the paper disclose the multitude of binding relationships many employers have with state agencies such as the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (former DET) to the detriment of employees? This Office known to support employers and often denying unfairly ousted employees unemployment benefits, useful to both the EOLWD (in not having to pay) and the employer in maintaining low unemployment insurance rates (as rates increase with every unemployment benefit awarded). Similar favors are exchanged between employers and dozens of other state offices, including the MCAD, authority on discrimination, which is known for its own discriminatory practices.

Add to this unequal playing field the fact that proper legal representation is rarely obtainable by middle income employees and if obtained, usually involves a single practice lawyer who is easily swamped by the routine shenanigans and harassment tactics of corporate law firms representing the employer. Now fast forward to the customary destruction and alteration of evidentiary documents

at courts of law up to the SJC (Supreme Judicial Court) to manipulate cases when favoring the culpable party. And this naturally followed by refusals of clerks to produce these doctored files when requested.

Recent official assurances by Secretary of State Galvin, that Public Documents would be made more readily accessible through the Keeper of Records at his Office have also proven to be mere smoke screens to appease the public. The truth is that while his Keeper of Records can be useful in obtaining records, his office only monitors wrongdoings and does not enforce corrections of mishandled files. It works like the Lifelock commercial where people are told by those expected to correct calamities that they merely monitor, not cure, them, leaving those stricken to their doom. Unlike this hilarious commercial, the reality for those suspended in the purgatory of the Massachusetts judiciary is everything but, with nowhere for them to go for relief.

Which is why it may be preferable to not bother with waiting for the Boston Globe to rise to its duties or effect change. But for us, the people, to individually deal with this systemic disorder in Massachusetts by employing appropriate forms of revenge to attain justice. Aptly suggested by Thane Rosenberg* in his persuasive evaluation of acceptable responses to moral injury in “The Case for Revenge.”

*distinguished fellow at the New York University School of Law,

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CHIEFS FROM PAGE 5

two weeks later and the mom was crying at the wake saying ‘I should have done something, I should have listened. So the best advice I can give is that what we see with these addiction problems, especially with opioids is that three or four times going to rehab is not unusual. Nobody is getting clean once, kicking it and going on with their life. So, you have to understand that there are going to be some failures involved, but you have to reach out and you have to reach out early. Get them in these programs. Get them on the radar screen so that they have a fighting chance to beat this. If you don’t, if you think you can handle it yourself, you absolutely cannot handle a family intervention and do it yourself. It’s not going to work.

CHIEF GRAY: Don’t judge. Don’t allow a stigma to influence your judgment as far as not going for help. We don’t use the term “junkies” any more. They are addicts. We do that to try and take away the stigma of having that battle.

DUGGAN: “So, I shouldn’t use junkie anymore then?”

CHIEF GRAY: “Uh, no. That’s one of the reasons the stats on this are under-reported. They are afraid to call for NARCAN, they are afraid to call and say someone overdosed. I’ve talked to a lot of the officers who go on these calls and they say that ‘the person just dropped.’ If it’s heroin or fentanyl let us know. Let us take care of it. Don’t worry about the stigma that you think is going to go with it.

Tom Duggan is publisher of The Valley Patriot, hosts the Paying Attention Program, is an author, a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and a 1990 police survivor. Subscribe to his YouTube Channel for live news and video. You can E-mail your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com






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ROBIN'S KITTY CORNER

Indoor/Outdoor

Robin Desmet
VALLEY PATRIOT KITTY COLUMNIST

When Paul adopted Goldy he had already spent half of his life as a cat that was allowed outdoors. Although Goldy loves to snuggle with Paul on the couch, he also enjoys his time roaming in the yard. He is an avid hunter and he loves to spend time hiding in the grass like a Leopard on the Serengeti. Goldy goes outside at will during the day and spends his nights indoors. He has lived this indoor/outdoor lifestyle for years and he clearly enjoys it.

Janine owns 3 cats. All of her cats were adopted and all 3 cats also enjoy an indoor/outdoor lifestyle. Her cats are young and full of energy and spend all day playing, hunting, and roaming at free will in Janine's generously sized yard. Janine lets her cats out in the morning and they return at suppertime each day. That is until last September. One evening last fall only 2 of Janine's cats came home for dinner. The third cat is still missing to this day.

Everywhere I go I see "missing cat" posters. In addition, I see tons of Facebook posts about cats that are missing and I also hear of many missing cats via word of mouth. Most of these cats never return. In fact, only about 15% of lost cats ever make it home. Clearly, cats like Goldy enjoy being outside. But if you let your cats outside, you are undoubtedly putting your cat's life at risk.

Indoor cats enjoy much longer lives than outdoor cats. The average indoor cat lives to be about 15-17 years old. The average outdoor cat lives only 3-5 years. Cats that are allowed inside and out are usually somewhere in between depending on a number of different factors.

Cats that are allowed outdoors are at much greater risk of injury and death than indoor cats. Motor vehicles pose a huge risk for cats that are outside. According to the National Traffic Safety Administration, 5.4 million cats are struck by cars every year. Predators such as coyotes and foxes, and other cats and dogs all pose threats to cats that roam outdoors. Cats that are



free to roam are at risk of poisoning from pesticides and antifreeze. Poisoning can occur either accidentally or intentionally. Outdoor cats are also subject to many forms of cruelty and abuse. Other people may not share your fondness for cats and may intentionally hurt your pet. Cats have been shot with arrows and BB guns, hung from trees, kicked, burned, poisoned, and used as bait for dog fighting.

Outdoor cats are also subject to serious infectious diseases such as feline leukemia, and to a variety of parasites including fleas, ticks, and worms. When they come in at night, they bring these parasites in with them. Besides getting hurt, cats may be stolen or picked up by well-meaning individuals and brought to an animal shelter.

By far the easiest way to protect your cat from potential hazards or from becoming lost or stolen is to keep your cat indoors. If you do have an indoor/outdoor cat, then take precautions like microchipping your cat and using a breakaway collar with an ID tag. Limit your cat's outdoor excursions to the daytime and treat regularly for fleas and ticks. Make sure your pet is spayed or neutered.

Keeping your cat indoors can be the best decision you can make for your cat. Indoor cats can be both safe and happy and can live very long lives. Besides, who wants to find a dead mouse on the doorstep?





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To Get Healthy, Start from the Inside

Rick Bellanti
VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

If you're like me, you see yourself and judge yourself from the reflection you see in the mirror daily. There is more to our health than what our reflection tells us or what is being seen as a number on the scale. The best place to look is inside you, where all the magic is happening behind the scenes. Many things that you feel going on with your body like aches, pains, inflammation and swelling starts with what we are putting into our bodies and eating on a daily basis.

Did you know that the foods we eat daily can change the makeup of your body and the way we feel in our everyday lives?

Let's talk about pH Levels in our body. The pH level is one of the most important balance systems of our bodies. The term pH stands for potential of Hydrogen. It is the amount of hydrogen ions in a particular solution. The more ions, the more acidic the solution. The fewer ions the more alkaline the solution. The pH level is a measure of acidity or alkalinity, on a scale of zero to fourteen, with zero being most acid, fourteen being most alkaline and seven being mid-range. The most critical pH balance is in the blood.

We all should strive to have an alkaline based body, but is yours too acidic?

Are you feeling drained, irritable, do you often have headaches or dry skin and hair? One of the things I suffered from was muscle cramps and inflammation of my joints. These are just some of the common ailments of having excessive levels of acid in our bodies, and not everyone knows that the acidic pH level of our body is causing it. Not surprisingly obesity, joint problems, ulcers, heart issues may be caused by the excessive levels of acid trapped within the body. If there's one common thing with all the mentioned health problems, it's acidity in the body way above normal.

The first thing I would recommend is purchasing pH level test strips, they are

very inexpensive (I bought a box of 100 strips for \$6.00 on Amazon). You can test by using your urine or saliva and get your levels. It has a color code right on the package to match up and get your pH level. You should do this twice daily (afternoon/evening) keep a little chart and monitor the changes. It's best to not test first thing in the morning as your urine will be different and not an accurate measure. Once you see your levels, it's time for changes!

I'm sure there are plenty of supplements or prescriptions you could be prescribed, but the easiest way (and most cost effective) is simply diet. Not necessarily being on a diet, but changing our diet to more alkaline based foods. The top ten of those are: garlic, red radish, lemons, tomatoes, spinach, cucumbers, avocados, celery, broccoli and wheat grass. Almost all of the green vegetables are great like: kale, alfalfa and zucchini (my personal favorite). Now you don't only have to eat only these vegetables, just incorporate them more and more into your diet. To really eliminate the excessive amounts of acid in your blood, tissues and organs, a huge fraction of your diet should consist of these alkalizing foods.

If your body is on the higher end of the Acidic level, you'll need to cut back on things like bread, coffee, aspartame, meats like lamb and pork, processed foods and smoking.

If you are suffering from the symptoms of excessive acidity in the body, it is time for you to take extra care in your daily diets. Lack of sleep and over work is also a major factor in having your body in an acidic pH level. So, take a break, relax and eat your greens, your body will thank you.

Rick Bellanti is a wellness columnist and is on a journey himself to lose 240 lbs, and has lost 160 lbs since the start of 2015. If you have any questions or comments, please post them to his Getting Healthy with Rick Bellanti Facebook page and once a month he will address a few of the topics here.

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IN THE GROOVE with Cindy Annis

Buddy Holly

Cindy Annis
VALLEY PATRIOT VINYL COLUMNIST

Buddy Holly was born on September 7, 1936 in Lubbock Texas. His birth name is Charles Hardin Holley. When Holley turned 11, he followed in the musical footsteps of his brothers and sister, and took piano lessons. After nine months however, he quit the piano and grew interested in being a guitar player after being impressed by a classmate. His parents got him a guitar, and Travis, his brother taught him to play the instrument. Buddy became friends with Bob Montgomery when he was attending the Roscoe Wilson Elementary School. When Holley got to high school, he played with Sonny Curtis, and Jerry Allison. By 1952, Holley teamed up with Jack Neal to perform in a talent show on television as Buddy and Jack. In 1953, Jack stopped performing and was replaced by Montgomery. Buddy and Bob as they were called performed on radio station KDAV on Sunday mornings, and performed live in Lubbock. When Holley graduated high school in 1955, he wanted to make a career out of recording music. He started recording songs on the Decca label, but he didn't stay with Decca for long. He would have recorded more of his songs on the Decca label, but the record producer wanted a traditional country sound that adults would approve of, but Holley wanted to make rock 'n' roll records. On the first single that Holley recorded 'Blue Day, Blue Night', Decca records misspelled his last name and from that point on, Buddy Holley was known as Buddy Holly. After leaving Decca records, Holly went to Clovis New Mexico to meet with producer Norman Petty. There, they re-recorded 'That'll Be The Day' with the rock 'n' roll sound that Buddy wanted. The demo tape was sent to Brunswick records in New York. The label quickly released the demo on May 27, 1957 under the group's name The Crickets due to a five-year argument with Decca that didn't allow any songs that Holly recorded on Decca to be recorded on another label. Brunswick liked the sound of the group so much that an agreement was made to let Holly use his musical talent on later songs entirely. Since legal clearance was granted by Decca to let Holly record on other labels,

keeping up with what label goes with what song or album became confusing to the fans. If you look at the record labels that Buddy Holly and Buddy Holly and The Crickets were on, you'll notice that all songs that were credited to the Crickets were released on Brunswick, while songs that were credited to Buddy Holly were released on the Coral label. In August of 1958, Holly married Maria Elena Santiago. Holly asked to marry her on their first date. To keep his female fans happy, the marriage was kept secret. Santiago acted as both mother and secretary to the band while they were on tour. She cleaned the laundry and maintained the instruments. As a secretary, Santiago booked the shows and handled the money since Norman Petty wasn't paying Holly or the other band members. Holly hired lawyer Harold Orenstein to figure out how much money he and the band members were supposed to receive from Petty. To help get Holly money, a promotor from New York named Manny Greenfield booked concerts for him. Greenfield received 5% of Holly's earnings. Later, Holly was sued by Greenfield because some of the money he made was out of state. In December of 1958, Holly cut ties with Petty and the Crickets. Since Petty was still holding Holly's money, Holly had no choice but to go back on the road touring and create a new backup band. In December of 1958, Holly put together a backup band that would perform with him on the Winter Dance Party tour. The band members included Waylon Jennings on bass, Tommy Allsup on guitar, and Carl Bunch played drums. On January 23, 1959 the tour started in Milwaukee Wisconsin. On February 2, they made their second stop on the tour playing at the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake Iowa. Due to unhealthy conditions, Holly decided to fly to the next tour stop in Moorhead Minnesota. Tragically, Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper died when the airplane crashed a few miles away from the Mason City Iowa airport at 1:00 AM on February 3. *That's the story of Buddy Holly. Tune in to Cindy's Vinyl Vault on 980 WCAP Sunday nights at 10, Monday nights at 11, and Wednesday nights at 10. Get your fix of the best music from the 50s, 60s and 70s and even make a request at 978-454-4980. Remember it's not how old it is, but how great it sounds.*

TV TALK WITH BILL CUSHING



Amazon's 'Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' Lives Up To Its Name

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

Amazon's terrific new series 'The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' was created by Gilmore Girls creator Amy Sherman-Palladino and her husband David Palladino, and stars Rachel Brosnahan in the title role. Miriam "Midge" Maisel is a young Jewish homemaker living in her Manhattan apartment with her husband Joel and their two children in the 1950s. By the end of episode one she quickly becomes the former Mrs. Maisel after she learns that her husband is leaving her for his secretary. Midge develops an interest in stand-up comedy because Joel liked to perform at a club in the Village after work. But getting on the stage isn't something she thought of for herself. One thing leads to another and Midge ends up behind the mic and she quickly realizes that she is very good at it. She meets Susie (Alex Borstein), who is the bartender/manager of the club. Susie instantly sees the potential in Midge and quickly moves in to help educate her in the art of show business. Her education is also helped along by comedian Lenny Bruce, played by Luke Kirby. Lenny and Midge form a bond over their comedy and their struggles with the obscenity laws of the era. After her marriage falls apart, Midge moves back in with her protective parents, played by Tony Shalhoub (Monk), and Marin Hinkle (Two and a Half Men). Midge wants to be independent and gets a job working at the makeup counter of a department store. She also keeps trying to pursue her career in comedy, all while trying to keep it a secret from her family

at the same time. It proves very difficult the more popular she becomes. Great writing and great performances are everywhere in this series. Brosnahan (House of Cards) is charming as Midge, and her work is not going unnoticed. She has already taken home a Golden Globe and Critics Choice Award for her role. She plays both the happy housewife and naughty comedienne to perfection. Shalhoub is also excellent as Midge's father, and Kevin Pollak is hilarious as Midge's father-in-law. But the real standout is Alex Borstein as Susie. Borstein, who also provides the voice of Lois on 'Family Guy', steals every scene she is in. Her scenes with Brosnahan are gold. Where the series really excels is in its crisp, well written dialogue. The conversations that take place between all of the characters, especially Midge and Susie are prime examples of top notch writing. The writers are also careful and take their time to develop Midge, slowly getting her out of the house and onto the stage. If they were to rush it and make Midge an overnight star, it just wouldn't be believable. Midge may have stumbled into a career in comedy, but as viewers we're happy she ended up there. The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel is a delightful, funny, and extremely enjoyable show and it is already committed to a second season. The series is available to stream on Amazon Prime. *Do you have any questions about TV? Email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future column. For daily TV news, follow me on Twitter @BillsTvTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk.*

NOTEBOOK FROM PAGE 7

ter/spring semester at Opportunity Works, (HOW Bldg) 671 Kenoza Street adjacent to the Haverhill campus 100 Elliott St. The next session runs from February 26 through March 30 and the second session is scheduled May 21 through June 25 (no class May 28th). Classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The registration deadline is February 16. The last information session will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. on February 14 at the HOW Bldg. Information sessions for the program starting May 21 will be held on April 18, April 25, May 2, and May 9 from 10 to 11 a.m. The registration deadline for the May program is May 11. All information sessions and classes are held in the HOW Bldg. This 125-hour program introduces fundamental nursing assistant skills. It prepares participants to take the Massachusetts state examination to become licensed as a Certified Nursing Assistant and be listed in the Nurse Aide Registry. Participants who successfully complete

the program will also receive a Home Health Aide certificate. The program includes classroom instruction, skills practice, and clinical experience at a local, long-term care facility under the supervision of a registered nurse. This is an opportunity to enter the in-demand, direct-care field and can also serve as a gateway to other health care professions. Students who successfully complete the program and pass the state CNA Exam may now also earn six credits toward NECC's Health Care Technician Certificate Program. The program fee is \$1,279 plus \$97 fee for books and materials. For more information email Nancy Tariat at ntariat@necc.mass.edu or noncredit@necc.mass.edu NORTH ANDOVER HIGH HISTORY LEARNING LAB AND ARCHIVE The history department at North Andover High School is happy to announce the creation of the North Andover High

School History Learning Lab and Archive. The objective of the North Andover High School History Learning Lab and Archive are twofold; first we would like to create a History Learning Lab where students can through hands on experience live, touch, and see history in action. The History Learning Lab will allow teachers at North Andover High the opportunity to expose their students to historical artifacts and resources so their students can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of historical artifacts and time periods they are from. Instead of reading about history in a textbook they can touch and experience history for themselves which is far more impactful and memorable. Our second objective will be to create an archive that will house primary sources and artifacts relating to North Andover, Johnson High School, and North Andover Public Schools. We will strive to collect, document, and use sources and artifacts related to local history in an effort to celebrate the diverse and rich historical tradition of this area. This effort will allow teachers, students, and historians access to the rich history of our school system and our local community. We are looking for donations

of pictures, artifacts, and other materials from the time period 1860-1980. If you are interested in donating please contact Brian Sheehy at sheehyb@northandover-publicschools.com or call 978-790-5707. MASS PAY EQUITY LAW Join Attorney Kimberly Klimczuk of Skoler, Abbott & Presser, P.C., one of the leading labor and employment law firms serving employers in New England, for our Biz Buzz analyzing the amended Massachusetts Pay Equity Law. The amended Massachusetts Pay Equity Law, which goes into effect on July 1, 2018, imposes significant responsibility on businesses to ensure equal pay to employees of different genders for "comparable" work. But what is "comparable" work, and when is it acceptable to pay employees differently based on the job itself or their tenure with the company? What is the legal risk associated with failure to comply with the Pay Equity Law, and what can be done to mitigate this risk? Attend our Biz Buzz info session on the Massachusetts Pay Equity Law on Friday, February 16th from 9-11:00.



Young Bloods Fugitive Steven C. Touch Arrested

Last night at approximately 7:30 p.m., the FBI’s North Shore Gang Task Force and the Massachusetts State Police Special Tactical Operations Team arrested Steven C. Touch, in Lynn, Massachusetts. Touch is an alleged leader of the Young Bloods, a violent street gang operating in and around Lynn. Touch is scheduled to appear in Middlesex Superior Court later this morning.

On June 15, 2017, Touch, also known as “Kevin Touch,” “Fat Boy,” and “C Sick” was indicted by a grand jury in Middlesex County, along with two other associates for his involvement in a 2012 home invasion in Billerica, Massachusetts resulting in the murder of the victim. He is charged with murder in the first degree, home invasion, attempt to commit armed robbery, and two counts of conspiracy. Prior to that, an arrest warrant was issued on January 10, 2017 by Middlesex Superior Court for Touch, after he failed to appear in court on the following charges: possession of a large capacity firearm, possession of firearm without a license, possession of a large capacity feeding device, carrying a loaded firearm, and defacing a serial number on a firearm. Subsequently, on May 22, 2017, another arrest warrant was issued for him out of U.S. District Court

in Boston, Massachusetts for Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution.

Following his capture, Touch was taken to the Lynn Police Department, where he was booked and was later transferred to custody of the Billerica Police Department.

Last June, the FBI’s North Shore Gang Task Force announced it was offering a monetary reward of up to \$10,000 for information leading his arrest. However, no reward money will be paid.

The North Shore Gang Task Force along with the Massachusetts State Police Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section and local police officers searched intensively for Touch, who was believed to be moving from address to address frequently.

No further information is being released at this time. All further inquiries should be directed to the Middlesex District Attorney’s Office.

The FBI’s North Shore Gang Task Force is composed of the following agencies: the FBI, the Massachusetts State Police, Massachusetts Department of Correction, the Essex and Suffolk County Sheriff’s departments, Boston, Chelsea, Lawrence, Lynn, and Revere police departments.

Touch’s Wanted Poster has been marked captured and can be found here.

YOUR MONEY

Capitalizing on a Growing Global Economy

Alex Talcott & Chase Hagaman
VALLEY PATRIOT MONEY COLUMNISTS

George Washington understood a key principle about public debt: It is a tool to be used when necessary, but not to the detriment of future generations.

Unfortunately, the United States has significantly strayed from this principle.

In his Farewell Address, Washington said: “As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible . . . not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear.”

Since the start of this century, there has been an immense increase in the national debt. Key factors included expansion of health care programs, tax cuts, military conflicts, the Great Recession, and an aging population with millions of Baby Boomers leaving the workforce.

The debt is now at its highest level, relative to the size of our economy, since World War II. Federal deficits -- the difference between government spending and tax revenue each year -- are rapidly growing. The Fiscal 2017 deficit totaled \$666 billion, and in the very near future we could return to \$1 trillion deficits. This time, however, such large deficits are projected absent an economic crisis; no Great Recession to blame.

George Washington declared that elected leaders should carefully manage the nation’s debt, and that the public should support efforts to use the debt wisely and then pay it off. The founding father also emphasized that after crises or conflicts that might require a debt buildup, there should be a “vigorous exertion” to pay it down.

Everyday Americans often express alarm over the country’s high debt. And polling by a variety of organizations often reveals the understanding that our current fiscal trajectory is not a sustainable one. Perhaps it is time to put that concern into action, and encourage elected officials to start making the tough choices that are necessary.

Congress has ignored Washington’s advice for years, often relying on budget gimmicks, overly rosy economic growth projections, deficit spending and the postponement of essential reforms.

Lawmakers find ways to work around mechanisms like budget caps and “pay

as you go” policies that were intended to keep the federal budget on a sustainable path.

One of federal lawmakers’ fundamental charges is to put together and approve 12 appropriations bills each year to fund the government. This process has repeatedly broken down, leading to fiscal cliffs, stopgap measures, threatened or actual government shutdowns, and omnibus bills—large, rushed spending packages that often receive too little scrutiny and rarely establish solid, long-term priorities.

When the budget process broke down in 2017, lawmakers again relied on stopgap measures that looked only weeks or months ahead, as they were preoccupied with political expediency and the need for a “legislative win” in the form of a lopsided tax code overhaul.

Our first president would likely decry efforts to reduce tax revenue in the face of mounting debt – one of the likely results of the new tax law. In fact, we can take Washington’s word for it. He noted that “towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant.”

Instead of making matters worse, this Congress might leverage what has been a steadily growing economy to enact needed reforms to chart a more responsible course on the debt and engage in long-term planning on necessary government programs like Social Security and Medicare.

Real reform would entail tough choices that bear generational ramifications in mind, simplifying and making the tax code more efficient in at least a revenue-neutral manner, managing per capita and long-term costs in health care and retirement security, working to reduce budget deficits, and stabilizing the national debt.

George Washington and more than a few of his successors helped build up a Yankee Doodle nation to a global leader. Members of Congress should now be about leading and leaving a responsible legacy; otherwise, perhaps they should just consider leaving.

Chase Hagaman, JD, is the New England regional director for The Concord Coalition, a national nonpartisan organization that advocates for generationally responsible fiscal policy. Alex Talcott, JD, is a member of Concord’s New Hampshire advisory board.

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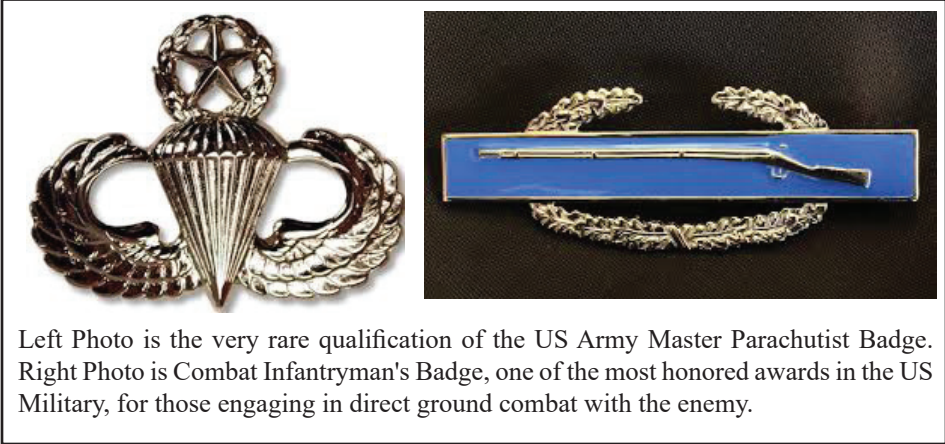
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Left Photo is the very rare qualification of the US Army Master Parachutist Badge. Right Photo is Combat Infantryman's Badge, one of the most honored awards in the US Military, for those engaging in direct ground combat with the enemy.

HERO: FROM PAGE 1

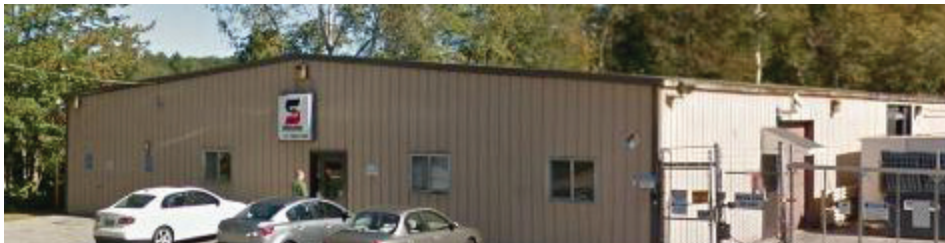
Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Civic Action Award, Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Citation, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Major Kelley is qualified to wear the converted Ranger Tab, the Vietnam Jump Wings, and the U.S. Army's Master Parachutist Wings, a rare qualification. According to the U.S. Army; "The Master Parachutist badge (with a star surrounded by a laurel wreath above the canopy) requires 65 jumps (night, combat equipment, mass tactical, as jumpmaster), 36 months on jump status and graduation from a Jumpmaster course". Most of us, would not jump out of an aircraft once, let alone 65+ times, with Infantry gear on, and at night?

His career in the U.S. Army included two tours in Vietnam, a tour with the famed 82 Airborne, the 7th Special Forces Group; it was with the 7th Special Forces that Rick completed his first tour

in Vietnam, serving on the border of Laos and Cambodia, where he worked with the Rhade Tribe in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. He served in Japan with the 1st Special Forces, on Okinawa. He then completed his second tour of duty in Vietnam. Two of his later assignments were instructor duty at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, then his final tour with the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in Boston, Massachusetts.

After retiring from the U.S. Army, Rick practiced law for 33 years, while living in Andover with his wife Marilyn and his family. It is here that the story will continue next month, in the March issue of the Valley Patriot. Rick has been serving his fellow Veterans on the Board of Directors for the Northeast Veteran's Outreach Center in Haverhill, Massachusetts since 1985. The Valley Patriot will be interviewing Retired Chief of the Boat Master Chief John Ratka USN, the current Executive Director, on how the center is helping the Heroes in our Midst, and how we Americans can also help.



DEP Fines Safety-Kleen Systems in Salisbury for Hazardous Waste, Underground Storage Tank Violations

Company Works to Address Violations and Bring Facility Back into Compliance

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has penalized Safety-Kleen Systems, Inc., in Salisbury (a Wisconsin-based company), \$75,575 for environmental violations found during routine inspections of the company's licensed hazardous waste treatment storage and disposal facility at 90 Rabbit Road in Salisbury.

"MassDEP will strictly enforce the regulations pertaining to the safe and proper management of hazardous waste facilities in order to protect public safety and the environment," said Eric Worrall, director of MassDEP's Northeast Regional Office in Wilmington.

The hazardous waste violations found during the May and June 2017 inspections included: the leak-detection system sump sensor was not installed properly; the spill bucket was not in good operating condition; personnel had not been properly trained; hazardous waste containers

were not properly marked as stipulated in the applicable regulations; and, certain records were incomplete or not available when requested. In addition, the underground storage tank spill bucket and tank-top sump had accumulated liquid in them.

After the violations were brought to the attention of Safety-Kleen, the company corrected the physical components and provided MassDEP with documentation demonstrating that equipment repairs had been made, the labelling was corrected and a commitment to training and record-keeping was in place.

Under the terms of the consent order, Safety-Kleen will pay \$60,375 of the penalty and \$13,200 will be suspended provided there are no further violations over the next year.

MassDEP is responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.

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Just the Facts

John MacDonald
LOWELL COLUMNIST

Since I have announced my candidacy against incumbent Eileen Donoghue for State Senate of the 1st Middlesex, it's fair to say that I haven't launched a traditional approach to campaigning. I rely on facts. Unlike many campaigns that I've seen, all the facts on Eileen are clear and verifiable with a few clicks on Google.

However, unlike myself, everything about Eileen Donoghue is traditional. Eileen is a career politician that follows the path of least resistance, abides by tradition at the State House of voting as she's told and doing what's she's told to do. Eileen proposes low-hanging fruit legislation that's safe. It's so safe that it usually does nothing to improve the lives of the working women and men in her district. She's a perfect career politician. She's loved by Progressives like Stan Rosenberg (she voted with Stan 98% of the time) and the entrenched who feed off having access to her State House office. She's almost always a solid yes to anyone, who will owe her, or that she owes. She's been this solid vote for Progressives and her political allies for 10 years.

What she hasn't been.... She's never bold, just insatiable about keeping herself... safe. Any position that isn't gift wrapped, she'd rather just wait for what's next. She hasn't been concerned with the 1st Middlesex, that's for certain. Just knock on a few of the working-class doors in Lowell, Pepperell, Tyngsboro, Groton, Westford and Dunstable that I have knocked on. She's never been there or stood on their front steps. Never!

She votes for what's best for Boston and certainly not what's best for the working lower and middle class. She hasn't been fighting for legal citizens that go through the process of becoming naturalized citizens, she fights for people that come to Massachusetts illegally, rarely pay taxes, receive state benefits like free healthcare, free state college tuition...oh and willfully dismiss the law. She hasn't fought against fraud in Mass Health either, she's voted for it. She's voted against helping businesses by imposing a "1 size fit's all" minimum wage, which has proven to downsize job opportunities for young people and puts unneeded stress on border-town (NH) small businesses in the 1st Middlesex that struggle to survive. Who cares in her mind? Prior to my campaign, she's rarely had a challenger.

Eileen has not been a friend to Gov-

ernor Baker, although she pretends to be. Governor Baker is popular in the 1st Middlesex. Eileen pretends to support the Governor when she's attending swanky dinners or high profile local events, but in reality, she votes with Stan Rosenberg 98% of the time and voted 100% against the 179 Budget vetoes that Governor Baker proposed. She voted herself an 87% pay raise (Her bi-weekly pay went from \$2682.62 to \$5,028.08. From 70K per year to over \$130K) in midnight emergency session. She voted against you having a tax-free weekend (While approving \$18 million in pay-raises for her pals). A weekend that would benefit moms and dads, elderly, businesses and struggling college students.

The proof is in very voting... she can't run or hide from the facts... although she tries. She asks that you ignore the facts and keep her in her cushy elected position, because she's doing so much for you? Or herself?

Eileen is even more dangerous for votes that are heading to the State Senate soon. A millionaire's tax that has been a proven failure in states like Connecticut, she wants it (good luck to the rest of us who aren't millionaires, when they leave). She's only voted to increase taxes. Ask yourself how will she vote if the ballot question that reduces the state sales tax from 6.25% to 5% is passed by the voters? Will she ignore the will of the people or vote for the reduction? I think you know. How will she vote when Stan Rosenberg wants to put new tolls on Route's 93 or 495? Will she vote for you or vote with Stan? Will she vote to place Stanley Rosenberg back as Senate President or will she vote for herself? Good question, but neither choice is good option.

Very simply my candidacy offers a clear rebellion against the status quo. I will fight to control state spending and taxes (We don't have an income problem in Massachusetts, we have a spending problem). I will work to reform state government and work with Governor Baker. I will fight for veterans and citizens in need. I will refuse the legislative pay raise and will fight for your pay check and not my own. I will support the working class. I will fight for you! So, there you have it. What's it? A choice. You have a choice between a career politician fighting for herself... or you can vote for a businessman, father and veteran fighting for you. The only way to fight against politics as usual... is to vote against the usual politicians.

This ad donated by Kathleen LaPlante,
Author of "Surviving My Father's Suicide"

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From The Pages of
The Valley Patriot

Elizabeth Warren, Introduces Bill to Prevent ‘Forum-Shopping’ in Bankruptcy Cases

Washington, DC - United States Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas) today introduced the Bankruptcy Venue Reform Act of 2017 to ensure corporations file for bankruptcy in districts that allow small businesses, employees, retirees, creditors, and other stakeholders to fully participate in cases that will have tremendous impacts on their lives.

"Workers, creditors, and consumers lose when corporations manipulate the system to file for bankruptcy wherever they please," said Senator Warren. "I'm glad to work with Senator Cornyn to prevent big companies from cherry-picking courts that they think will rule in their favor and to crack down on this corporate abuse of our nation's bankruptcy laws."

"Closing the loophole that allows corporations to 'forum shop' for districts sympathetic to their interests will strengthen the integrity of the bankruptcy system and build public confidence," said Senator Cornyn. "I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan, common-sense solution to ensure equal access to the courts in bankruptcy proceedings."

Background:

The Bankruptcy Venue Reform Act of 2017 would prevent the practice of forum shopping in Chapter 11 bankruptcy cases and ensure fairness in the bankruptcy system by:

- Requiring individual debtors to file for bankruptcy in the district where their domicile, residence, or principal assets in the United States is located;
- Requiring corporate debtors to file for bankruptcy in the district where their principal assets or principal place of business in the United States is located;
- Corporate debtors would no longer be permitted to file simply on the basis of their state of incorporation.
- Stopping debtors from filing for bankruptcy in another district simply because an affiliate of the debtor has filed there; and
- Requiring that courts transfer or dismiss cases filed in the wrong district.

The Bankruptcy Venue Reform Act of 2017 is endorsed by the Commercial Law League, Texas Bankruptcy Bar Association, Texas Hotel & Lodging Association, Boston Bar Association, Ag & Business Legal Strategies, and Iowa Bankers Association.

MA Man Convicted of Receiving Firearms Intended to Murder Judge, Former A.G.

CONCORD, N.H. – Acting United States Attorney John J. Farley announced that late Tuesday afternoon, a federal jury found Edward McLarnon, 69, of Malden, Massachusetts, guilty of receiving firearms with intent to commit murder, as well as three related weapons and explosive charges, after a six-day trial.

Evidence presented at trial showed that in October of 2015, McLarnon made contact with a person he believed to be an arms dealer (who was actually an undercover FBI agent) for the purpose of buying illegal weapons. McLarnon negotiated with the undercover agent at a store in Chichester, New Hampshire and paid a total of \$700 in cash to obtain the weapons. On November 6, 2015, the defendant took possession of a .22 caliber pistol with a silencer, an AK-47-style semi-automatic rifle, ammunition, and two hand grenades containing high explosives at a rest stop in Seabrook. He was taken into custody shortly after taking possession of these items. The evidence further showed that McLarnon intended to use the weapons to kill his ex-wife's husband, as well as a Boston federal judge, and a former Massachusetts Attorney General.

The jury found the defendant guilty of: (1) receiving an unregistered silencer; (2) receiving firearms with the intent to commit murder; (3) receiving explosive materials; and (4) receiving an explosive with the intent to harm persons or property. He faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison for each count of conviction. He will be sentenced on May 10, 2018.

"I am grateful to the jury for rendering this swift and just verdict," said Acting

U.S. Attorney Farley. "The evidence at trial demonstrated that the defendant devised a frightening plan to use weapons to kill several individuals to express his frustration with the legal system. Thanks to the hard work of the brave law enforcement officers who participated in this investigation, the defendant's violent plan was stopped before anyone was hurt."

"Edward McLarnon purchased an AK-47, grenades, a silencer, and ammunition with the sole intent of killing the former Massachusetts Attorney General, a sitting federal judge, and other government officials. Today's conviction ensures that Mr. McLarnon will not be able to further endanger innocent lives," said Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Boston Division. "This case is a testament to the tireless efforts of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, where the close coordination between federal, state, and local law enforcement led to the successful disruption of McLarnon's plot. Each and every day, the Joint Terrorism Task Force strives for a perfect record, and we'd like to thank all of our partners for their dedication and hard work in bringing this case to a safe and successful conclusion."

This matter was investigated by the FBI, U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney John S. Davis and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew T. Hunter.

Quota International Holds Baby Shower

Quota International of Lawrence Baby Shower held for the Pregnancy Center of Haverhill to support the needs of their many clients.

Diapers, sleepers and healthcare products for both moms and babies were donated from the Quota members.

Quota International is a non-profit organization empowering women, children, the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired in local communities around the world - celebrating 99 years of community service.

From the left - Laurie Salvi of the Pregnancy Center, LuAnne Bonanno, member of Lawrence Quota and International Vice President, Mary Lou Maurer of North Andover, President of Lawrence Quota Club, Phyllis Simmons of Methuen and Lorraine Habib of Windham, both Quota of Lawrence member and organizers of the Baby Shower.



NECC Offers Medical Interpreter Certificate: Info Session Planned

An information session, for individuals interested in enrolling in a Medical Interpreter Certificate Program at Northern Essex Community College, will be held on Saturday, March 3, from 10 to 11 a.m. at NECC in Haverhill at the Opportunity Works (HOW) building, 671 Kenoza St. adjacent to the NECC Haverhill campus, 100 Elliott St.

The information session explores the field of medical interpreting and provides details about the Medical Interpreter Certificate Program.

The 10-week, noncredit program will be offered Saturdays beginning March 17, and run through May 19 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NECC in the HOW Bldg. To enroll in this 60-hour program, individuals must be bilingual - fluent in English and one other language.

For additional details on the information session or program, visit www.necc.mass.edu/med-interpreter or contact Dianne Lahaye at dlahaye@necc.mass.edu or call 978-556-3065

Trained medical interpreters are in demand. This program is perfect for anyone preparing for an entry-level career as a medical interpreter, as well as working interpreters who would like to prepare for the national board exam.



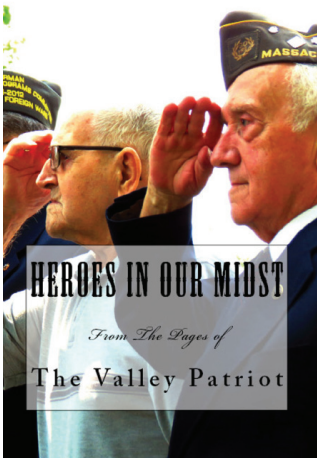
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SUSAN’S BOOK REVIEWS

“Balancing Your Bipolar”
© 2017 by Blythe Edwards

Sue Piazza
VALLEY PATRIOT BOOK REVIEWS

62 pages (advance copy) Kindle Edition
Genre: Non-Fiction
Rating: 3.5 out of 5 Bookmarkers

This is a break from my usual reviews. I know a few people who are bipolar, I thought reading this book might help me to understand them and their illness better.

The book started off thin from the beginning. As an advance copy, there were still some grammar mistakes. It appeared the book was in need of a good editor. But, since it was the message that was important, I continued reading.

This book is a good starting place. One is given rudimentary knowledge of the condition. One thing I did really like about this book is that one does not have to be bipolar to gain benefits from the book’s information. Many insights the author gives into her coping mechanisms can be utilized in one’s everyday approach to life. Nutrition, exercise, meditation are all modalities that we can all profit from.

I would like to impress upon people that if one is truly bipolar, or one suspects they or a loved one is bipolar that one should seek the help of a qualified mental health professional at least for an evaluation and diagnosis if not outright treatment and medication.

Some chapters, like Chapter 2 “Early Warning Signs” is a disappointment. There is not even one full page and the author tells us of one warning sign and states that she doesn’t know of any others. Maybe she should have checked with family members, maybe they could’ve provided insight and if not, at least she could have told us that she’d made the effort to do so, with no success. I found this lack of research troubling and hoped that it was not a harbinger of things to come. I read on. My opinion upgraded in Chapter 3

“Defining Bipolar”. What makes this book different from others in this genre is that Blythe is totally honest regarding her condition, how it affects her, her family, and her relation to them and the world in general. I found this very personal view important for my understanding.

At the end of each chapter, the author gives “Action Steps”. These are associated with that segment’s topic. This means of reinforcing her material is quite useful. One valuable suggestion is to write down the things that were amazing that day and to be grateful for them. Fantastic insight and tip! She also suggests creating boundaries for oneself and to accept oneself, warts and all. Again, these methods are not, and should not be, confined to those who are bipolar.

There were a few drawbacks that the author is aware of. There are terms, like SSRI, that she mentions being prescribed but does not say what these letters mean or the type of medication it is. Then she mentions being attracted to MLM’s. I don’t have a clue in hell what this is. Very annoying. If ones point in writing a book is to give info then do so. Don’t hide behind the alphabet. Blendtec is another term that requires a Google search since it isn’t (wasn’t) explained.

This book an admirable attempt. And, I also found the author, Blythe Edwards, genuinely caring and concerned for those who have this same illness. At the end of the book she gives her email address (balancingmybipolar@gmail.com) and tells the reader to contact her with questions, comments, etc.

Despite obvious flaws, I would still recommend this as a starting point for anyone who is looking for further understanding specifically into bipolar and generally into ones own self-awareness.

Cues from a Higher Source

Joe D’Amore
VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

To call this place a town was a bit of a stretch. But it had a name. It was approximately 10 acres dotted with a few dwelling structures too poor to be called houses. This was a farming community , a back lot of a larger regional municipality . And this is where she came from.

She was poor, uneducated, young- maybe 14 or 15. She spent her days making or mending clothes, cooking, cleaning and the highlight of the day was to leave her humble squalor to go down to the single well . There she could draw water but also engage in conversations with other women. ~~There was excitement in her life~~ though. She was betrothed to an older man. An arrangement by consent of both she and he was made and approved by the families. Now all that had to happen was to wait the customary time frame; typically a year or two, before she would become a bride. He was a provider. A man who feared God ; respected in the community . His word was gold. He was humble, able to care for her and a blessing; indeed a rare find. He was her ticket out to a better life.

But all of this would be interrupted. Unearthly designs on the young girl would dislodge her from her perceived certain path in life. A stranger visited her and informed her of stunning news. She was pregnant . With child but not by a man. Her world suddenly turned upside down.

What could she tell the man who had made a commitment to her? What would the women say at the well? How could her life suddenly careen from a guided path to a bewildering one? Was this a curse or a blessing?

The only control she now had in her life at a moment's notice was a decision to make. The stranger did not demand anything of her. In fact, he was there to obtain her consent to embark on a life's journey

that she could not fully understand at that moment. At that moment she acquiesced . In coming weeks her betrothed, who himself was visited by a stranger in a dream understood his fate and complied to a startling new plan for his life he hadn't designed either. The rest is history whether real or contrived depending on one's perspective.

Yes; this is the story expressed in the Gospel of Luke of Mary and the Annunciation. The girl from Nazareth. To Muslims and Christians who revere Mary, this is monumental intervention in the affairs of mankind. For people of other faiths or no faith this is at best a fable at worse a cruel hoax.

~~At the risk of being accused of sneakily~~ trying to proselytize christianity the point I want to make here that even in this accounting of a woman from a different age with few choices and limited means she was utterly respected. The Angel Gabriel did not visit her with a decree but an offer seeking consent.

We have witnessed in recent weeks with disturbing frequency and acceleration an increasing litany of immoral and criminal transgressions committed by powerful men against women. These men by their thinking were above commonly acceptable behaviors and even the law and were not held to standards that required respecting anyone. Yet whether God is real to you, or not it doesn't matter. The universally understood story revealed that even God had the good sense to ask a woman's permission about something that affected her before just making the decision for her- or unilaterally imposing His will. And who is more powerful than God?

Certainly not the men who have extinguished their extraordinary accomplishments in their fields , destroyed reputations and families by illuminating their dark side.

Joe D'Amore writes from Groveland

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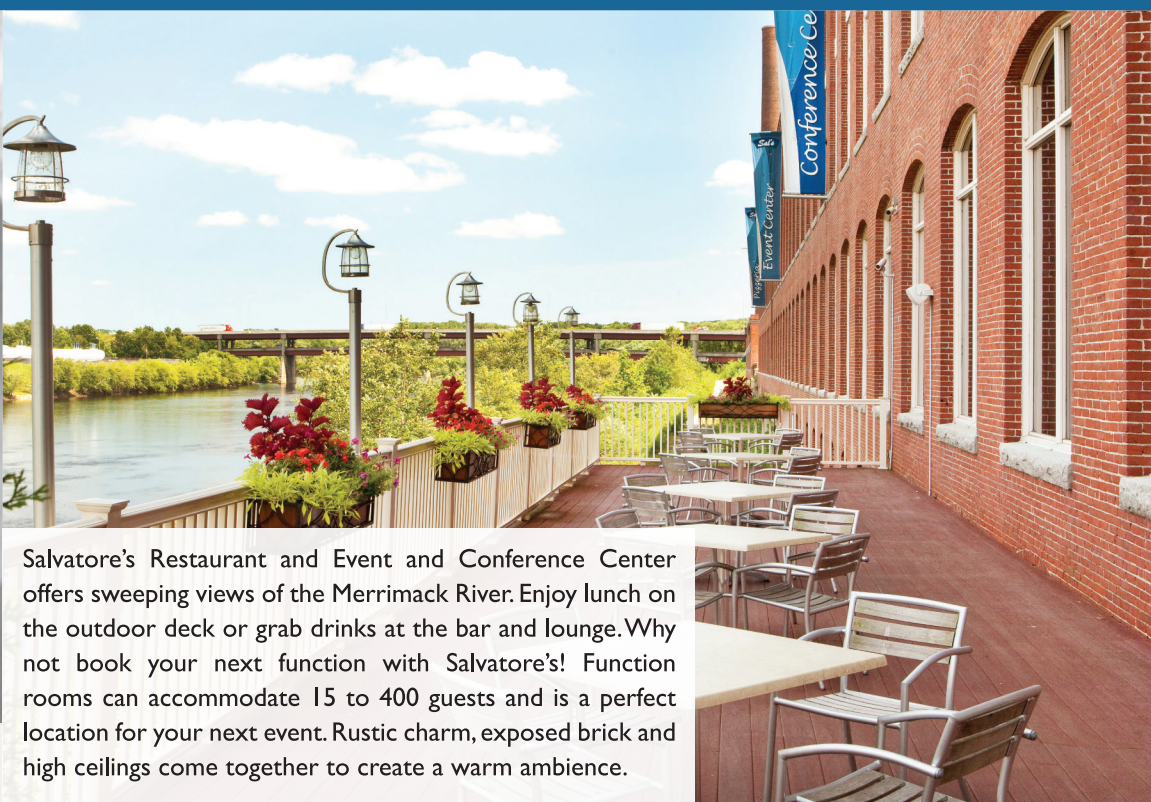


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